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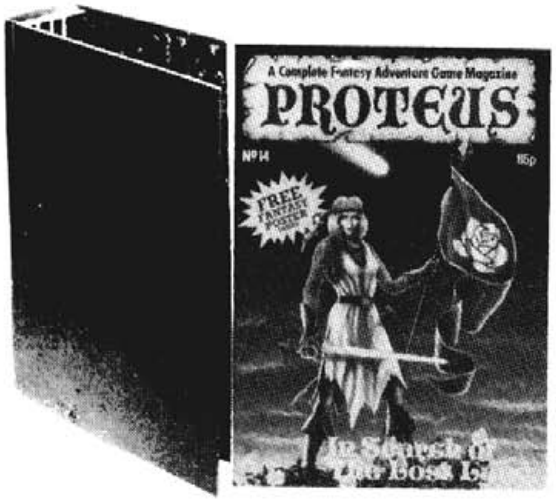

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PROTEUS No. 15

The Havarine Madness

By M.W. Bolton

DICE and a pencil are all you need to begin this adventure – then *you* decide which route to take, which dangers to brave.

As you progress in your Quest, you are likely to encounter various traps, or face monsters. You will also get information, or find certain items which will be of help to you in your quest. You should record these in your *quest sheet* as well as keeping an account of how many rations you have left. As you use up rations, remember to cross them off in your *quest sheet*.

It is important that you build up a map of the way. You may not succeed at your first attempt, but each new journey will give you more information – until you are at last successful in your quest.

If you try to read the magazine in numerical order, it will make no sense. You must choose, when you are given the choice, which section to turn to, and which traps, puzzles, or monsters to face. Good luck!

NO. 16.

Your adventure in No. 16 will be another mind bending puzzle by David Brunskill. This one should keep you tied up for many an hour, trying to overcome Margas and his cruel warlike people.

The poster (shown above) will be by Judy Mitchell.

No. 16 ON SALE FRIDAY JANUARY 15, 1988.

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Introduction

You are about to enter a strange and fantastic world of long ago. Weird creatures, mysteries, dangers and magic abound. As an adventurer of some experience, you are strong, wise, courageous and agile. You will need all of these qualities if you are to succeed in your next quest. You may also need a little luck!

Before you begin the quest take two dice, a pencil and a few sheets of paper on which to map your progress. As you will have to fight many battles along the way, you must first determine your level of dexterity and strength.

Dexterity and Strength

Roll one dice, add six to this number and make a note of it. This is your *Dexterity* score and shows your skill in swordsmanship.

Now roll two dice, add twelve to this number and make a note of it. This is your *Strength* score.

These scores will alter as you go along. You may, for instance, lose strength points in battle. You may restore your strength by eating a meal. One meal restores five Strength points. You must remember though, that *your Strength and Dexterity Scores must never exceed their initial value determined by the throw of the dice at the beginning of each adventure.*

Rules for Fighting

On the way you will meet people and creatures you may choose or be forced to fight. Each will have its own Dexterity and Strength scores given in the text.

To resolve a battle:

1. Roll two dice and add this to you opponents Dexterity Score. This is its *Fighting Power.*

2. Roll two dice and add this to your Dexterity Score. This is your *Fighting Power.*

3. If your Fighting Power is greater, you have scored a blow and wounded your opponent. Subtract two points from its Strength Score. If your opponent's Fighting Power is greater, it has wounded you. Subtract two points from your current Strength Score. If both scores are the same, you have parried each other's blows. Neither loses points.

The next round of battle proceeds in exactly the same way. Repeat steps 1, 2, and 3 until either your score or your opponent's is zero. A zero means death.

Losing and Gaining Points

Sometimes you will be awarded extra points during the adventure. Add these to your score but remember **you can never exceed the initial value set at the beginning of the adventure**. You may also lose points due to some difficult activity. Simply deduct these from your current score.

Replenishing Strength

As you read on you will discover what weapons, additional equipment, money and rations you may take on your journey. There will be sufficient food for a set number of meals. Make a note of each meal you eat, each piece of gold you spend and each object you find. Use your rations, money and equipment wisely. You have a long and difficult road ahead.

Your Quest Begins...

The low-beamed room is filled with smoke from the log fire and the sound of many voices talking and laughing. Occasionally voices are raised aggressively but soon die down. People are too tired to quarrel for long for it is late, or rather it is early. This inn is still open in the early hours of the morning.

You sit in a darkened corner occasionally taking a drink from the tankard in front of you, wondering how much longer you will have to wait. Where is the messenger you have come to meet?

You look around you. It is a rough and ready sort of place, but you could hardly expect better in such a small community on the edge of the wild lands. This is the only inn in the little village of Dalgolath. You cautiously study your companions in the inn. Is one of them the messenger? Your fame as an adventurer has spread far and wide, even as far as this remote little kingdom of Garrangar. You have received a summons – no, hardly that – a plea for help, from a member of the Royal Household of Garrangar and are now waiting for contact to be made.

A figure in a dark cloak approaches you and stands silently by the table. You reach for your tankard, making sure that the signet ring on your finger is clearly visible. It had been sent with the letter that brought you here.

"Well met friend," says the cloaked stranger in a muffled voice. Motioning you to follow, the stranger slips unobtrusively through a side door. Outside you follow the swiftly disappearing figure up a small hill behind the inn.

"We shall not be overheard here," says the messenger.

"How may I be of service to the Royal House?"

For a time there is silence and then the messenger speaks. "This was once a fair and prosperous kingdom; just laws, decent inhabitants, a kingdom of contentment. That was before the Havarines came. They are a crazed people. They brought the madness with them. The king himself is now infected with their dreadful affliction. Where once he was wise, he is now foolish. From a good and just man he has turned into an unpredictable tyrant. His tyranny is destroying our country." The messenger pauses briefly. "Sometimes he seems sane for a while and pleads for help which none can give. Then he will have wild raging fits and terrifying dreams. . . ."

Suddenly the door of the inn below you bursts open and in the light from the doorway you see a figure stumble out into the night, howling and screeching and tearing up earth and stones with his fingers. "Get away! Get away!" the poor creature screams in a frenzy, fighting off nothing at all.

"You see how it is with them," says the messenger, "There are many in Garrangar like him."

"Is there no cure?" you ask, horrified.

"There is a wise-man – Zermahaar he is called. He is said

QUEST SHEET

Dexterity

Strength

Skill

Rations

Items Discovered

Secrets Learnt

to have a potion which may be efficacious. He also has a talisman, known as The Sword of Ruin which would rid us of the Havarines for all time. His castle is in the mountains of the wild-lands. Alas, the castle of Adonerath is almost impossible to reach. The Havarines have created monsters and trickeries out of their crazed minds which inhabit the woods and wild places. I will not deceive you, it is a dangerous journey where death lurks on every side. But we are desperate for your help."

"I will undertake the journey to save your king, aye and your kingdom too," you declare boldly.

The messenger turns slowly and throws back the hood of the cloak revealing a head of long, golden hair and a face of great beauty.

"It is the queen who asks this of you," she says. "Many brave adventurers of Garrangar have tried and failed. Now more and more are infected with the madness and we can trust no-one."

"Your majesty," you say, "You may trust me. I will attempt the journey."

"You have not heard all," says the queen, "Even if you win through to the castle of Adonerath, dangers will still face you. I suspect that Zermahaar is more than a little mad himself. He delights in tricks and puzzles to test your wits and skill in battle. Beware his tricks; they are deadly. He will also require a precious gift in exchange for the potion and the Sword of Ruin. There are many precious things to be had in the wild-lands. Perhaps one of them might please him. However, his anger will be great if you offer him an unworthy gift."

"In spite of all dangers, I will take up the challenge," you say again.

The queen studies you closely, nods briefly and produces from behind a rock a traveller's pack from which she takes a leather pouch.

"If you succeed, half the kingdom is yours. In the meantime here are twelve gold pieces for your journey. They

may be useful to you. Here also is a length of strong rope, food and water sufficient for six meals and the finest sword in Garrangar. If the king is to be released from the madness, you must return before sunset tomorrow or he is doomed, as are we all. See, the sky is brightening. You must leave now. Good fortune go with you."

You bow low, then taking up the pack and the sword you make your way down the hill. The quest is begun.

Now read on....

1

As you make your way North from the little border town of Dalgolath, the sky gradually brightens in the East. You tramp along the stony track listening to the sound of birdsong. The landscape is rugged and empty; just rough grass and stones as far as the eye can see. At last you come to a junction. Which way will you turn, East or West?

East? Turn to **36**.
West? Turn to **150**.

2

The old woman gives you the box in exchange for two pieces of gold. You try to open it but it is locked. You take out your sword to force it open but meet with no success.

"No, no?" says the old woman, "you will not be able to open it without the rusty key." Have you found the rusty key on your travels?

Yes? Turn to **115**.
No? Turn to **94**.

3

Will this unlock the prison of the king's madness you wonder? You hand your gift to the old man.

He looks at it, then screams with rage and flings it back at you. "What's precious about this?" he shouts, "Guards! Kill the rogue!"

You have made the wrong choice. You have failed in your quest.

4

You continue to follow the road South through the woods. Soon you come to a junction. A track joins yours from the West. It appears to lead over rough open moorland. To the South the road narrows and runs through dark, dense forest. Will you go West or South?

West? Turn to **38**.
South? Turn to **180**.

5

By now the cobwebs are so numerous that you find they are hindering your progress. You cut a way through the web so that you can follow the path. Suddenly several pairs of eyes gleam in the tangled web. An enormous spider lurks in the gloom. The web quivers and with a sudden rush the spider is upon you. You draw your sword and thrust ferociously at the huge jointed legs that try to grasp you. The fight is fast and furious.

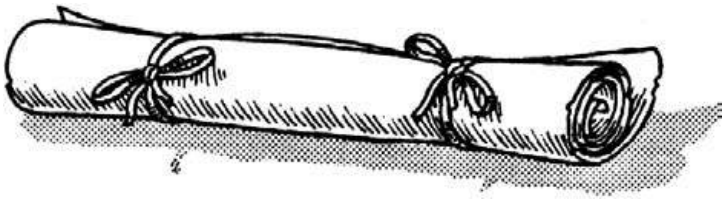
	Dexterity	*Strength*
GIANT SPIDER	9	11

If you win, turn to **109**.

6

You continue East, being careful to keep to the path as the marsh on either side looks treacherous. The path here does not look much used. Suddenly you stop. Faintly in the distance you hear a voice calling your name. You are puzzled, for no-one knows you here except for those who sent you on your quest. Is it a messenger sent to help you or is it a trick? The voice calls you again. Will you follow or will you ignore it and carry on?

Follow? Turn to **69**.
Ignore? Turn to **161**.



7

The old woman hands you the scroll in exchange for two pieces of gold. You thank her and begin to unfasten the leather thong to see what is written on the parchment. The old woman stops you. “No,” she says, “You will know when the time is right to open it.” You put the scroll in your pack and continue. Turn to **68**.

8

“Sire,” you say, kneeling before him, “You are the Lord Zermahaar I take it?”

“Of course I am you fool, get on with it!” snaps the old man.

“Lord Zermahaar,” you begin again, “I have travelled a long and arduous way to see you and beg your help.”

“Oh really,” says the old man, “And why should I help such a tattered creature as yourself?”

You look down at yourself in surprise and see that after all your adventures, you are indeed a sorry-looking figure.

“Sire,” you say, “It is not for myself I plead but for the kingdom of Garrangar, a once noble and prosperous country which is now infected by the madness of the dreadful Havarines. Even the king is crazed. It is for Queen Valyaveer that I beg you for a cure for her husband who is dying of the madness. Also she begs for the Sword of Ruin to break the tyranny of the Havarines once and for all.”

“Humph,” says the mighty Zermahaar, shuffling irritably in his chair, “Havarines eh? I like not Havarines. Mind you,” he adds, sitting up a bit, “I like not Garrangar either. What are they to me? However, I may help you . . . if you amuse me that is.” He rearranges himself on his chair. “You must guess my age,” he says and begins to recite this little rhyme:

Fingers of a score of men,
Legs of a crab multiplied by ten,
Less the ears of a baker’s dozen of dogs,
Plus the bulging eyes of a couple of frogs.

If you can’t solve the riddle, shame on you! Turn to **158**.

9

The road runs along the edge of the plantation for a little way and then is joined by a track from the South. Looking down this you see that it runs only as far as the bottom of the plantation and then turns West. You reason that this would merely take you round the plantation and then back to where you began. So you decide to ignore this and continue East. The road twists and turns downhill until you arrive at another junction. Will you go North or South?

North? Turn to **26**.
South? Turn to **154**.

10

When you climb back aboard, it is obvious that the captain and crew are becoming anxious about something. They point to the West where black clouds are approaching and the surface of the sea is churning. A storm will soon be upon you. With all haste, the fishing boat heads back across the bay. You are making good progress, but not quite good enough. The storm breaks and the small boat plunges drunkenly from one massive wave to the next. Rain lashes, wind howls and thunder and lightening add to the chaos. The crew struggle manfully but it is a terrible task. A huge wave sweeps everything from the deck – ropes, fishing-tackle, the dingy . . . , all is gone. Just then a horrible rending noise is heard and you notice the mast is beginning to crack. Without the mast and sail the boat will be helpless.

“Quick! a rope!” yells the captain, “If we can bind it with rope the mast may just hold long enough!” All the ship’s ropes have been washed overboard but you still have your pack. Is there still a rope in it?

If you have the rope Turn to **184**.
If you have not Turn to **47**.

11

You make good progress along the road East. The fields on either side of you are flat, lush and green. After some time you come to another crossroads. A smaller road crosses your main route. To the North it appears to run towards wooded hills and to the South into damp marshland. The road East seems also to run through marsh and you catch a glimpse of a river some distance ahead. Which way will you go?

East?Turn to **6**.
North? Turn to **70**.
South? Turn to **122**.

12

At the top of the cliff it is grassy and pleasant. You pause for breath, brush the dust and gravel from your clothes and look around. Ahead of you a rough track runs North along the side of the headland on which you now stand. Another track runs to the East and disappears over the hill.

Will you go North along the coast or East over the hill?

North? Turn to **64**.
East? Turn to **153**.

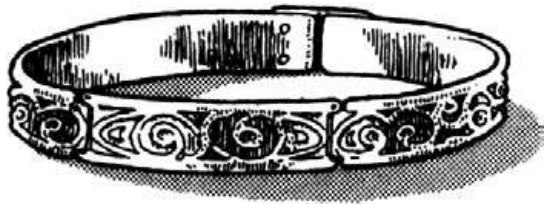
13

You continue North over the bleak moorland. It is becoming a little misty in places but not enough to trouble you. You climb uphill for some distance and eventually begin to come down the other side. The road swings right here and is becoming more stony. You continue to pick your way downwards. The mist is much thicker now, turn to **160**.

14

You slither down the loose stones of the cliff path and eventually jump down onto the shingle below. The little beach is surrounded by high cliffs. There is no way from the beach except by water or by the cliff path down which you have just come. You walk towards the little boat. Suddenly, after rounding a small outcrop of rock, you come across a grisly find. There lies the skeleton of a man. His clothes are mostly rotted away though pieces of leather from his jerkin still lie in the shingle.

Clenched in the bones of his right hand is a beautiful, jewelled dagger. His left hand is stretched out as if reaching for something. You stir the sand and pebbles in front of his hand with your foot to see if the object that the poor creature was reaching for might still be there. Sure enough, you find



something. It is a simple collar of gold of an antique design; just a plain loop of metal rather like a horseshoe. It is not particularly attractive but it is made of gold. Would this or the dagger be a precious gift for Zermahaar or are they worthless trinkets?

Will you:

Leave them both in the sand?	Turn to	**106**.
Take the jewelled dagger?	Turn to	**177**.
Take the golden collar?	Turn to	**90**.

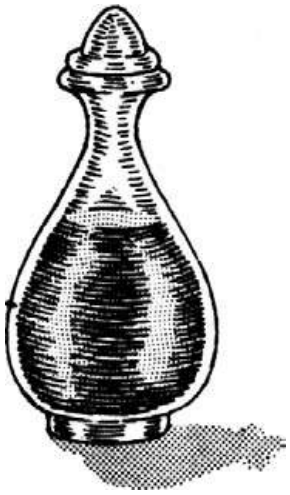
15

The track runs deeper into the wood. The trees are so close together that the sunlight cannot penetrate and it is quite dark and cold. Soon the track turns sharply East. Suddenly you hear ahead of you anguished cries and roars of rage. There is also a clanging, rattling noise which puzzles you. What lies ahead?

Then, bursting through the trees comes a dreadful figure. A giant of a creature, hardly a man. He is enormous and his eyes glint with manic rage. Each massive wrist is manacled and a length of heavy chain dangles beneath each clenched fist. With a roar of fury the CHAINED OGRE launches himself at you, swinging the heavy chains with devastating accuracy. You prepare to defend yourself.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
CHAINED OGRE	8	12

If you win you continue East until you join another track running North/South. To the South you can see the East/West road you first came along so you decide to head North. Turn to **44**.



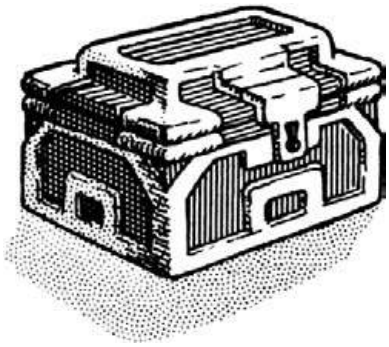
16

Heading West, it is not long before the road swings round to the South, obviously skirting a small plantation. Soon the road turns East. You walk along with the trees on your left and meadows on your right. Ahead is a small cottage. An old woman, well wrapped up in a woollen shawl, sits beside a small stall outside.

"Will you buy, stranger?" she asks as you pass, "Only two pieces of gold."

You stop and look at the goods she offers. There is a small bottle containing some kind of potion, a battered wooden box with a rusty lock and a scroll, rolled and tied with a leather thong. Could any of them be useful on your journey? If you have enough gold will you buy one of them or walk on?

Buy potion?	Turn to	**52**.
Buy box?	Turn to	**2**.
Buy scroll?	Turn to	**7**.
Walk on?	Turn to	**68**.



17

The tunnel is only faintly lit with the bluish glow but it is enough to see that it is quite wide. You walk on, your footsteps echoing eerily. You have no idea how far you have walked but it seems a long way. The blue glow is fainter now and you have difficulty seeing where you are putting your feet. Suddenly you lose your footing and pitch forward, landing with an echoing splash, in a deep, subterranean pool. After some struggling, you manage to haul yourself out of the water and, dripping and cold, retrace your steps to try another route. Deduct 1 Strength point. Return to **65**.

18

You step cautiously into the ruined building. It does not look very safe. To your left, the only remaining tower stands crumbling and decayed. A spiral staircase leads up the tower. Ahead of you is the entrance to a passage. Which way will you go?

Staircase?	Turn to	**91**.
Passage?	Turn to	**58**.

19

After getting your breath back you sheath your sword and trudge West through the woodland. Soon the path swings South. After a short distance you join another track running East/West. You decide to go West as to go East would probably lead you back the way you have come. Turn to **156**.

20

You slip the jewelled pendant into your pack and, with a last look round to make sure you have missed nothing else, you begin to descend the stone steps. Turn to **66**.

21

The road running North is broad and well made. On your left you can see animals grazing peacefully and on your right is open moorland. You walk on making good progress. Soon another road joins yours from the right. Will you continue North or go East?

North? Turn to **13**.
East? Turn to **35**.

22

You cling on grimly, avoiding the whipping branches as best you can. Then the horse suddenly rears up, whinnying loudly. You try desperately to control him. But this is obviously no ordinary horse. He proceeds to perform an amazing series of leaps, bucks and turns which prove too much even for your riding skill and you find yourself sailing through the air to land in an undignified heap. The horse, when you look round for him, is standing cropping the grass as if nothing had happened.

As you pick yourself up you see something you had not noticed before. Sticking out from the horse's saddle-bag is a roll of parchment. This may be important. You approach the horse calmly so as not to alarm him, but each time you come near he moves just out of reach. Eventually you manage to take hold of a loop of rein as the horse turns away. He reacts strongly and begins to rear and plunge. At last he jerks the rein free from your hand and gallops away. As he flashes past you just manage to snatch the roll of parchment from the saddle-bag.

You break the seal and unroll the parchment. This is what is written:

"Though wisdom cannot be gotten for gold, still less can it be gotten without it."

Will this aid you in your quest? Puzzled, you place the parchment in your pack and walk on West. Turn to **156**.

23

The track is narrow and rocky. You watch carefully on all sides but can see no living thing. It appears you have come to a dead end. Suddenly you hear a sound; a challenging roar which echoes out of the rocks themselves. Then, emerging from a cave, you see an immense dragon. He is green-scaled and armed with massive claws, teeth and a threshing, spiked tail which you feel could scythe through an arm or a leg with no trouble at all. You will need all your strength and skill now.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
DRAGON	12	14

If you win, turn to **98**.

24

You continue to travel North at a steady pace. The horse now seems to have got over its terror. There is woodland on both sides of the road now. To your left you notice a track running West. Just then, out of the corner of your eye you glimpse a movement and, almost immediately, an arrow flashes past, rather close to your head. It embeds itself in a tree. You leap from your horse and it races off through the wood. You can now see the archer. Seeing your drawn sword, the archer tosses aside his bow and is now coming towards you with his sword.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
ARCHER	10	10

If you win, turn to **136**.

25

Leaving the monster dead upon the shingle you have no choice but to retrace your steps to the fishing port to decide which way to go next. Do you wish to go East or, if you have not already done so, charter a boat to go to the island?

East? Turn to **41**.
Charter a boat? Turn to **108**.

26

The path runs due North between grassy fields to your left and marshland to your right. Soon you come to a crossroads. The road West you discount immediately having only recently come from the West. The road East runs through marshland towards a river and the road North appears eventually to run into a forest. Will you go North or East?

North? Turn to **70**.
East? Turn to **6**.

27

You cross the stone bridge. On the far side you turn East. You are in a pleasant valley filled with green meadows of lush grass. All around rise large hills with rugged mountains visible far away to the East. Cloud masks their peaks though from time to time you catch a glimpse of a castle. Could it be Adonerath? Soon you come to a junction. The main road runs North along the floor of the valley. A sandy track continues to run East. Which way will you go?

North? Turn to **157**.
East? Turn to **129**.

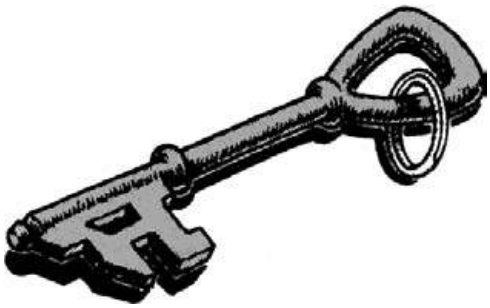
28

You walk East along the small lane. It is rather overgrown with brambles and weeds. Obviously not many people come this way. There are trees on either side and the lane becomes more and more difficult to follow in the undergrowth. You move aside trailing brambles and pick your way through tall grasses and weeds. Suddenly the ground gives way beneath you and you tumble, along with a pile of earth and debris, into a deep pit. Perhaps the trap was laid for some large animal. You hope no bear or other large beast will pick this moment to fall in as well.

You are unhurt, just rather cross, and begin at once to try and extricate yourself from this unfortunate situation. Taking the rope from your pack, you make a loop at one end and then, taking careful aim, throw it at a tree stump which you can just see at the edge of the pit. At the third attempt you succeed in securing the rope and quickly climb up the rope to firm ground again. Annoyed, you make your way back to the crossroads and head North. You realise you have left the rope behind but decide not to go back for it. Deduct 1 Strength point. Turn to **111**.

29

You pick the small rusted key out of the box and put it in your pack. You thank the old man and return to the dinghy. Soon you are on your way back to the fishing boat. Turn to **10**.



30

The mist begins to clear a little and ahead of you you see a river. “Go North,” the man in the marsh said. Well, now the track turns North and runs beside the river for quite a distance. There is no sign of life except for occasional water birds but from time to time you think you hear strange noises. You notice that the water birds immediately take to the air whenever these sounds are heard. Warily you carry on. Presently you come to a junction. A road joins you from the West, but it seems it will take you back on your tracks so you decide to carry on North. The strange noises are heard again. You stop and scan the marshes to your left. Turn to **67**.

31

You hear a pattering sound behind you and turn your head cautiously to see what is coming. There is a small, elf-like figure a little way behind you on the path.

“Well, go on, open it!” he demands in a shrill, impatient voice, “I haven’t got all day.”

“How?” you ask.

“How? Strike the rock thrice with your sword and shout ‘Adonerath’ of course,” he says.

Adonerath! You have found it at last! The elf is getting impatient. “Get on with it!” he shouts, tapping his tiny foot. You strike the rock as he told you and shout “Adonerath”. There is a grating, rumbling sound and a section of rock slides in upon itself, revealing a wide opening.

“About time too,” mutters the cross little person as, pushing past you, he disappears inside. Turn to **193**.

32

You press on. The sun dapples through the trees on either side of you. You see a small track to your right. Will you continue West or go North?

West? Turn to **156**.
North? Turn to **15**.

33

The she-devil comes up the stairs towards you. The mocking eyes hold yours in a hypnotic trance. You feel you cannot look away. She is close now. She holds out her hand for the pendant, her finger nails just touching your chin.

“Give it to me,” she hisses in a threatening whisper, “Or you will be very sorry.”

The longest finger nail curls into the flesh of your throat as she speaks the last word.

Do you give her the pendant or fight for it?

Give it to her? Turn to **171**.
Fight for it? Turn to **74**.

34

As you draw your sword and begin to step up onto firm ground, the youth pushes you hard with his left hand while, with his sword, he slashes the last remaining rope of the bridge. It collapses into the river, taking you with it. You hear the youth’s spiteful laughter echoing through the gorge as you plummet to your death.

35

You set off East going up onto the open moor. The road is now only a track but the going is fairly easy. Soon the track swings North and becomes more stony then ever. You press on with some difficulty as it has become very misty and it is hard to see where you are going. Turn to **160**.

36

You continue over rough moorland. The stony road goes gently downhill, twisting and turning between rocky outcrops. Ahead you see a crossroads and the first sign of life you have yet seen. A hooded figure stands beside the road. He waves a hand in greeting and you tentatively do the same.

"Go South," he says. "There may be something to your advantage."

You are undecided. Is this an honest traveller offering you advice or is he a deceiving Havarine? Will you take his advice or not?

Take his advice and go South?	Turn to	**48**.
North?	Turn to	**92**.
Continue East?	Turn to	**11**.

37

Almost immediately you hear a loud, whirring sound and see a huge bird of prey swooping towards you. It is clear it is going to attack. You draw your sword and try to fend off the enormous creature. It has cruel-looking beak and talons and a wingspan of several metres. You manage to ward off the attack but then you see others approaching. You will have no chance exposed like this you think. If only you could get across without them seeing you. Do you have the cloak of invisibility?

Yes?	Turn to	**45**.
No?	Turn to	**162**.

38

You set off up the steep track and come out onto a bleak and empty moor. You continue for some time but the scenery never changes. You feel very exposed in this vast open space. Soon a thick mist creeps over the moor. It feels damp and cold and you can hardly see the ground under your feet. You grope forward slowly, feeling your way and trying to peer through the blanket of fog. At your next step you realise, to your horror, that the ground is no longer beneath your feet. You pitch forward with a cry and fall headlong into a deep, yawning chasm. You know that for you the adventure is over.

39

Noticing other similar containers on the chests around the great hall, you offer Zermahaar another for his collection. He snorts with rage and kicks it to the floor with his scrawny foot.

"Pah! You insult me. Guards, kill this vagabond!" he screeches.

You have made the wrong choice and failed in your quest.

40

You follow the man into the dark interior of the cottage, stooping to pass through the low doorway. Inside the room is filled with curios of all kinds, including several objects of strangely wrought design. One particular piece catches your eye.

"The silver chalice," you say, "What are those curious designs on it?"

"Ah," says the man looking pleased, "I see you have an eye for the unusual. It was made by the Elvin people of the Korowan valley. Those, I expect, are magical symbols. Perhaps the chalice was used in one of their mystic rituals. Three pieces of gold is my price," he says.

Will you purchase the silver chalice or is the price too high?

Purchase the chalice?	Turn to	**175**.
Leave and go North?	Turn to	**111**.
Leave and go East?	Turn to	**28**.

41

You set off up the hill, adjusting your pack more comfortably as you go. It is a good road and you make steady progress. At the top of the hill you scan the horizon. Below is the winding, silvery line of the river. To the North and East are high, wooded hills with mountains beyond. But where is the castle of Adonerath?

You make your way down the other side of the hill. Here the road is steeper and" more difficult. The road has deteriorated into a twisting, turning path which turns South and skirts a dark and mysterious wood on your left. As you walk you hear unnerving howls and cries echoing dismally through the woodland. They come nearer.

Suddenly, a dreadful apparition bursts through the trees onto the road in front of you. It is enormous and its body is covered in coarse, black hair. It stands upright, almost like a man, wielding in each of its six hands a spiked club. It is the dreaded KRASKAR. The huge, devil-like face leers at you, the tongue darting in and out between its fangs. Saliva drips from its jaws in anticipation of a meal of human flesh. The KRASKAR emits another eldritch howl and launches its attack.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
KRASKAR	11	13

If you survive, turn to **82**.

42

There is no other way to go but back along the dark passage. You feel great pity for the dead traveller but have no wish to join him in the grave.

You may investigate the spiral staircase to the tower. Otherwise you leave the ruined fort and return along the road West ignoring the way North.

Spiral Staircase?	Turn to	**91**.
Stone Bridge?	Turn to	**76**.

43

It is a narrow road between the trees but you stride on confidently. There is no sound to be heard but birdsong. As you continue, however, you begin to notice another

sound; the unmistakable howling of wolves. Growling and snarling can also be heard now and you think you hear a voice calling for help. Is someone really needing your help or is it the Havarines deceiving you? Will you leave the track and go to help or will you ignore it and carry on?

Help? Turn to **61**.
Ignore? Turn to **183**.

44

The broad road continues North for a considerable distance. Eventually you see a small cottage ahead by the side of a road which joins you from the right. A figure is standing outside.

As you approach the man greets you.

"Good day friend," he says, "This is a long and dusty road to travel. Will you step into my home and rest awhile? I have many objects which may interest a traveller such as yourself."

You wonder if the man is to be trusted. Then again, perhaps among his interesting objects he will have a suitable gift for Zermahaar. What will you do? Will you go into the house to see what the man has to offer, will you continue North, or will you take the track East?

Go into the house? Turn to **40**.
North? Turn to **111**.
East? Turn to **28**.

45

The huge birds are turning and swooping in for another attack. You hastily pull out the cloak, slip it on and move forward as quickly as you dare. The birds are obviously confused and circle overhead screeching with rage. Sometimes their flapping wings nearly knock you from the narrow path but at last you make it, unharmed, to the other side. You slip off the cloak, returning it to your pack. Turn to **147**.

46

He stops before a magnificent display of swords arranged on the stone wall to form a circle; the swords point to the centre, the hilts to the edge.

"There, do you see it?" he demands.

You look carefully. All the swords seem identical. As you watch, however, it seems that one sword appears to glow very slightly with a purplish radiance. You reach out and touch it. Zermahaar laughs encouragingly.

"Take it friend," he says, "Thanks to you, I have again my youth and vigour and you have the means to save the kingdom of Garrangar. While this sword remains in your possession, the Havarines are powerless. But when the king is restored to health you must entrust it to him." Turn to **123**.

47

The next wave is too much for the strained mast. With a deafening crack it splits off and mast, sail and rigging hang drunkenly over the side. The crew are unable to cut it free in time. The next huge wave overturns the hampered craft. All are thrown into the raging sea. There are no survivors. Your adventure is over.

48

The road South runs through pleasant meadow land. Ahead you can see a small plantation of fir trees. The road comes to a junction. Will you go East or West?

East? Turn to **9**.
West? Turn to **16**.

49

Flinging the knife aside in disgust, you draw your sword and begin to cut your way through.

Too late, you realise that these are no ordinary briars. All around you can hear the quiet creaking and rustling of the briars growing again, thicker and stronger than ever, faster than you can cut them back. Soon you are surrounded, entombed would be a better word, in a coffin of living wood. There is no escape; your quest ends here.

50

You see the ruins of a stone building. It could have been a small fort or stronghold in days past. The track comes to an end here. There is no way to go further as the hillside drops sheer away into a deep ravine.

On the far side of the ravine is a large, imposing castle. It must be Adonerath!

Will you investigate the small ruined fort or will you return to the main road and find another way to Adonerath?

Go into the fort? Turn to **18**.
Return to the road? Turn to **165**.

51

You reach out and snatch the knife greedily from the woodman's hand and hold it threateningly, daring him to

try and take it back. The woodman, however, merely shrugs his shoulders and turns away.

Then, looking at your prize, you realize you have been tricked. In your hand is nothing but a scrap of rusted metal which crumbles to red dust as you watch. You fling it from your hand and continue North. Turn to **101**.

52

The old woman hands over the small bottle in exchange for two pieces of gold. "What will the potion do?" you ask. The old woman looks at you quizzically. "Would you believe me if I told you?" she asks. It is hard to decide. She could be a Havarine. You decide to risk it. "Yes" you reply. The old woman says, "It will heal all wounds."

You thank her and go on your way. Turn to **68**.

53

The bluish light is fainter here and soon you find you cannot see at all. You grope forwards, feeling your way along the passage. It is so narrow that the rock walls almost brush your shoulders on both sides. Suddenly you receive a nasty crack on the forehead. You have walked into solid rock, loose one Strength point. You feel carefully all around but the tunnel is a dead end. There is nothing for it but to squeeze round in the narrow space, retrace your steps, and try again. Go back to the cave and go North, turn to **166**, or go East, turn to **17**.

54

As you stand, unable to move, you are aware of ice-crystals forming over your eyes. Soon you will know no more for the blood is freezing in your veins. Here you will stand – a frozen warning to other adventurers.

55

You are now travelling due East between marshland on your right and steep wooded hills to your left. After some time you come to a river. Ahead of you is a wooden bridge. To your left a track runs along the river bank. To the South is marshland with a small, insignificant track which you decide to ignore.

Will you cross the bridge and go East or take the track North?

Cross bridge? Turn to **148**.
Go North? Turn to **84**.

56

The mud is gradually but inexorably engulfing you. You try to drag yourself forward to catch hold of a tussock of grass nearby to pull yourself free. But, try as you might, you cannot reach it. Slowly the dreadful mud sucks you down. Your struggles only make the process faster. The stinking slime closes over you and you know no more.

57

You look suspiciously at the ragged old man. You do not think he can be trusted. You shake your head and, turning abruptly, head for the dinghy. You are soon on. your way back to the fishing boat. Turn to **10**.

58

The passage is dark and narrow, so narrow that by stretching out your hands on either side you can touch the damp, stone walls. The passage winds on in the darkness. From time to time you hear the rustling and squeaking of rats. You seem to be getting nowhere and wonder if it's worth continuing. The passage now bends to the left and you begin to see a faint light ahead. At last you come to the source of the light. Turn to **144**.

59

The She-Devil lies dead at your feet. Shaken, you stumble down the remaining stone stairs and out again into the daylight. At least you have the pendant. You put it in your pack, sheath your sword and return to the crossroads to take the road North, hopefully towards Adonerath. Turn to **157**.

60

You look at the old battle honours and weapons displayed on the walls and decide this gift might well please the old man. You lay it carefully on his knee.

He looks at it briefly. "Oh, come now, you disappoint me," he says, "Surely a fighter such as yourself would set no store by this worthless toy! Fool that you are – "Guards!" he roars, "Kill this numbskull!"

You have made the wrong choice. You have failed in your quest.

61

You hack your way through the undergrowth, trying to follow the direction of the sound. The growling and snarling becomes louder and you hear again the anguished cry for help. You press on, hampered by thorns and brushwood and at last come to a clearing. A poor wretch is trying desperately to climb out of range of the snapping jaws of three wolves. As you burst into the clearing, sword at the ready, the wolves turn their attention to you. You see an unnatural look in their eyes and wonder if wild beasts can contract the madness too. As if at a given signal, the three beasts leap towards you with bloodlust in their eyes. The fight is on.

WOLVES	*Dexterity*	*Strength*
1st WOLF	10	8
2nd WOLF	9	6
3rd WOLF	8	5

If you win, turn to **159**.

62

You decide to risk it and buy the bottle. You pay the two gold pieces and take the small, green bottle. The dwarf seizes the money and struggles away through the undergrowth as quickly as he can. Turn to **164**.

63

You turn right into a small passage. It is cold and eerie and you seem to hear strange whispering sounds. It becomes increasingly dark and you have to feel your way forward. The whispering sounds seem more and more like voices. Suddenly you bump quite hard into solid rock. You grope around but can find no way forward. The tunnel is a dead end. You turn around, rubbing your bruised head, and begin

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to make your way back. The whispering now becomes more insistent and you can hear the words.

The pendant, the pendant,
The She-Devil's token
Hold in your hand
And the ice will be broken.

If you have the pendant. Turn to **181**.
If you do not have the pendant. Turn to **142**.

64

You walk along the track looking down at the sea sparkling beneath you to your left. The island out in the bay certainly looks a pleasant place but will it distract you from your quest? You follow the track as it curves to the right round the headland. Eventually, it leads steeply down to a small fishing port. As you walk down there is some disturbance going on in one of the streets. People are shouting and nets and fishboxes are being thrown about. A man is restrained by several others but continues to rave and shout. It is obvious that the madness has struck here too.

You come to the harbour. To your right a road leads away East over the hill, another follows the coast still further North while here in the harbour are boats which might be chartered.

Will you charter a boat and go to the island in the bay; will you go East or continue North?

Charter a boat? Turn to **108**.
East? Turn to **41**.
North? Turn to **130**

65

You expect the cave to be dark but are surprised to find it faintly lit by a weird bluish glow coming from the rocks themselves. Just inside the entrance you can see a tunnel leading to your left, one to your right and one straight ahead. Which way will you go?

Left? Turn to **53**.
Right? Turn to **17**.
Straight on? Turn to **166**.

66

Your footsteps echo hollowly and you have to feel your way for some time in the pitch dark. Suddenly you are aware of another sound in the darkness; the sound of breathing. You are not alone! You draw your sword but are at a disadvantage as your sword arm is now hampered by the stone column at the centre of the stairs.

"Who's there? Declare yourself," you shout.

Your challenge is answered by high, mocking laughter. A greenish glow can now be seen lower down the stairs. Around the next turn of the spiral the source of the light can be seen. She is beautiful; she is devilish. A She-Devil bathed in an iridescent green light.

"Give it to me!" she hisses, "It is mine. Give me my pendant, meddlesome human, or you will die!"

If you have the pendant Turn to **33**.
If you threw it away Turn to **87**.

67

Suddenly the noise is right behind you. Something huge, slimy and wormlike flings itself around your legs. You are pulled to the ground. Looking up you see a GIANT LEECH preparing to attach itself to your body to draw off your life's blood. The width of the creature's body is greater than that of your own and its revolting touch makes you shudder. You draw your sword and scramble clear of the twitching coils which extend for quite some distance. The battle is on.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
GIANT LEECH	11	9

If you win, turn to **127**.

68

The road continues East for a little way and then runs North. Soon you come to a junction. The road runs East/West. You realise, seeing the plantation on your left, that you have walked right round it. To go West would be to retrace your steps. So, turning East, you follow the road as it twists and turns downhill. Soon it levels out and you see that the way ahead runs through flat and marshy land. You arrive at another junction. Will you go North or South?

North? Turn to **26**.
South? Turn to **154**.

69

You carefully step from the right hand side of the path and follow the direction of the voice. "I'm coming!" you shout. "Come quickly!" urges the voice.

You hurry on through the misty marsh. "Where are you?" you call. You are answered by what seems to be an anguished cry of pain. You hurry on again, calling from time to time, but no voice replies. Wisps of mist float across the marsh and it becomes more difficult to see your way. You tread cautiously over the quaking marsh and, too late, realise that the ground beneath your feet will no longer hold you. You are sinking in the marsh.

Do you still have the rope?

Yes? Turn to **121**.
No? Turn to **56**.

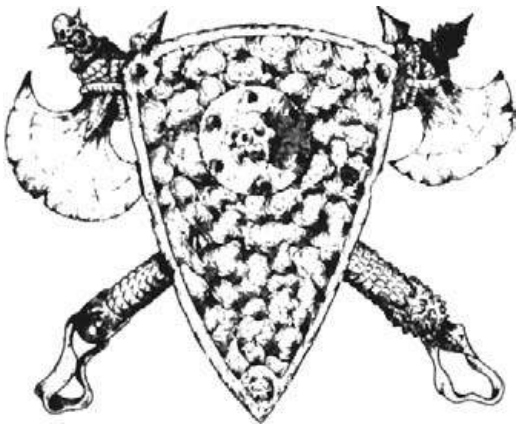
70

You can see a long way up the straight road ahead of you. To your left is grassland with a few trees here and there. To your right it is still marshy but ahead you see your way lies through forest. It looks a well-travelled road and you find it easy underfoot. Presently you come to a junction. A smaller road has joined you from the right. Will you continue North or go East?

North? Turn to **131**.
East? Turn to **55**.

71

The path South runs straight before you with steep hills to your left and grassland to your right. Walking is easy here and you feel you can relax a little. After some time the track turns sharp left and runs East. Then, to your dismay, you realise that you are coming to some more of that evil vegetation that gives off nauseous vapours when cut. You resign yourself to another struggle through the undergrowth. Turn to **124**.



72

The valley continues to twist and turn and the landscape becomes more bleak and barren all the time. Eventually, the road changes direction completely and you find you are heading West again, not East towards Adonerath.

Will you continue West or will you return the way you have come.

Carry on? Turn to **190**.
Return? Turn to **155**.

73

You disentangle yourself from the remains of the net and replace your sword. Shouldering your pack once more you continue North through the forest. Soon the road turns right. The path is broader now. After a while your path joins another running North/South. You decide to go North as to go South would probably take you back on your tracks. Turn to **197**.

74

Angered by this you step back, raising your sword.

"No, you shall not have it!" you shout defiantly.

The She-Devil raises her hand and a shaft of light energy, like a glowing sword, bursts from it almost knocking you to the ground. The fight is on.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
SHE-DEVIL	12	12

If you win, turn to **59**.

75

As you continue West you see on your right two horses standing patiently, tethered to a rail. One is black and one is white. They are both saddled and bridled.

You look ahead and see the road stretching for miles away over the open plain. Should you take one of these horses? It would certainly help to speed you on your way. On the other hand it may be a trick of the Havarines. Will you walk on or take one of the horses?

Walk on? Turn to **100**.
Take the black horse? Turn to **168**.
Take the white horse? Turn to **89**.

76

You remember this road quite well. It is pleasant to walk here with the river running alongside and the fields peaceful in the sunshine. You remember that soon the road will turn South over a stone bridge across the river. Turn to **96**.

77

As you walk towards the clearing you see that you are not alone. An old woman is gathering herbs. She is stooping with her back towards you. When she turns round you almost recoil in horror for she is the ugliest creature you have ever seen. She comes towards you, her small dark eyes never leaving your face.

"Will you take herbs for strength?" she asks, holding out a bundle of small green leaves.

Will you take the herbs or will you go on your way?

Take the herbs? Turn to **112**.
Refuse them? Turn to **200**.

78

There now stands before you a tall young man with a collar of bright gold about his neck.

"At last I live again!" he says. His eyes are closed and a look of pure ecstasy illuminates his face. You stand, open-mouthed. Then he turns to you. "Come with me," he says. Turn to **172**.

79

You try, very cautiously, to turn round and make your way back along the narrow path. As you do, your foot slips sending a shower of loose stones tumbling over the edge. Your arms flail wildly as you try to regain your balance, but in vain. You are falling helplessly. Soon it will all be over.

80

Taking the rope from your pack, you make a loop at one end. Then, keeping tight hold of the free end, you throw the loop towards the man. The first throw falls short, but the second lands near his outstretched hand. You tell him to put the rope around himself and hold on. Taking a firm grip, you begin to haul with all your strength. You heave and strain, apparently to no effect. Then gradually, you begin to make some progress.

As the mud steeped figure slowly comes clear of the dreadful stinking marsh, he is able, with your help, to scramble onto safe ground. He lies gasping at your feet.

"I thank you stranger," he says at last, "I owe you my life. Alas, I have nothing to reward you. Nothing but this." He fumbles in his sodden jerkin and produces a tiny brass key. "It may or may not be of use to you," he gasps, "Who can say?" You assure him that no reward is necessary but the man insists. "North," he says, "North is the way."

You bid him farewell and prepare to continue on your journey. What could he mean, North is the way? This road runs East/West. You can either go on or retrace your steps. Which way will you go, East or West?

East? Turn to **30**.
West? Turn to **107**.

81

You gradually realise that the unpleasant smell from the cut vegetation occurs at the same time as your attacks of fatigue and lightheadedness. You decide to try and push the foliage out of the way without cutting into the stems. It is hard work. While you struggle with a particularly awkward plant, you are aware that you are being watched. Swinging round swiftly, sword at the ready, you see a small and incredibly ugly figure. He is a kind of dwarf with pointed elfin ears and a twisted, rather silly face. The poor creature is hideously deformed and stands, propped up by a short crutch.

"Having a little trouble are we?

Can't get through without cutting the vines,

Can't cut through the vines without freeing the vapours,

Can't breathe the vapours without falling asleep . . . permanently,"

He chants in a sing-song voice, sniggering to himself. "Aahh, shame!" he mocks.

You glare at him angrily and continue to heave and struggle with the vines, saying nothing.

"For two pieces of gold I can give you something that will help," he suggests slyly."

He produces a small, green bottle and proceeds to uncork it and sniff the contents. "See, not tired," he giggles behind his hand, "Two pieces of gold only."

If you have enough gold, will you buy the bottle; seize it from him or carry on without it?

Buy? Turn to **62**.
Take? Turn to **143**.
Go without? Turn to **185**.

82

The KRASKAR at last defeated, you continue along the rough path until you come, much to your dismay, to the edge of a cliff. The river below you runs through a deep gorge. The distance across it, though not great, is much too far to jump. Is this a dead end? Just then you notice to your left, a little way upstream, a rope bridge. It doesn't look very safe; in fact all but one of the ropes holding it at the far side have rotted away.

You decide that you must risk it and try to cross. Turn to **117**.

83

You follow the river path South as it twists and turns with the river. Wisps of mist hover over the marshland in places. Eventually the path swings right, leaving the river and continuing West. Suddenly you see a movement in the marsh. A figure is struggling desperately in the foul mud. He is up to his waist and calling piteously for help. Do you have the rope still in your pack?

Yes? Turn to **80**.
No? Turn to **170**.

84

You walk on. To your left now is a wooded slope while on your right the river flows placidly along. Soon you see ahead of you that the path has come to an end. It appears there has been a massive landslip as earth, rubble and broken stones are strewn everywhere. It is now that you notice stepping-stones in the river, leading to a track which runs East on the opposite bank. They look slippery, neglected and most unsafe.

Do you wish to cross the river here or at the bridge a little further back?

Stepping Stones? Turn to **110**.
Bridge? Turn to **148**.

85

As you step ashore you think perhaps the trip has been in vain. There is nothing to be seen but rock and sea birds. You are about to leave, when you notice something half buried in the sand. You scoop away the wet sand with your hands and discover a small metal box. It has rusted so much that it is difficult to open, but after a few blows with a stone you manage to remove the lid. Inside is a small rusty key and a bottle of what appears to be some kind of wine. While you are examining these, you are startled by a voice behind you.

"Oho, a thief!" says the voice.

You spin round, grasping your sword. An old man in a tattered robe stands on the shore. He laughs to himself at your startled face.

"No need for that," he says, nodding towards your drawn sword, "I will gladly give you whichever you wish: they key or the nectar. The nectar will restore the battle-weary adventurer, and the key . . . who knows what the key is for? You may take only one, stranger; which shall it be?" Which will you take?

The rusty key? Turn to **29**.
The nectar? Turn to **186**.
Neither? Turn to **57**.

86

This passage is wide and fairly light. All around are weird shapes formed by stalagmites and stalactites. They look like strange glass monsters, shining with a bluish light. The cold is now intense. The floor is icy and your breath blows out in clouds in front of you. You begin to feel an incredible stiffness and can hardly put one foot before the other. You can no longer feel your hands and feet and soon the rest of your body begins to go numb. Breathing becomes difficult, movement almost impossible. You realise, to your horror, that you are being frozen alive! Is there no escape?

Are you holding the She-devil's pendant?

Yes? Turn to **167**.

No? Turn to **54**

87

"I don't have your precious pendant," you say contemptuously, "I threw it away into the ravine."

"What!" she screeches in anguished disbelief, "You did not read the inscription-fool! 'Though wisdom cannot be gotten for gold, still less can it be gotten without it,' "she chants sneerlingly, "Well you will certainly get *nowhere* without it."

She raises both hands. Two shafts of light energy burst from her extended hands and converge at a spot somewhere above your head. There is a blinding flash. The stonework begins to crack and crumble. Masonry falls all around you. The She-devil is gone and you are entombed in the rubble that was once a tower. Your quest is ended. Nothing remains for you now but to wait for death.

88

You walk on. The road becomes steeper now. You are climbing a bare and rocky hillside. The road runs between large outcrops of rock of a peculiar shape. They resemble huge statues though they appear to be natural formations. Soon on your left you notice a small track running North. It leads into a quarry. Your road still leads East up the hill. Will you go North or East?

North? Turn to **120**.

East? Turn to **179**.

89

You take a gold piece and leave it beside the road in payment for the loan of the animal. You take the white horse by the bridle and lead him onto the road. As soon as you mount, the white horse springs into action and gallops away like the wind. You seem almost to be flying over the open plain. Eventually you notice a turning to the North and consider going that way but the white horse will not stop. He speeds on Westwards. You are now passing through woodland. You pass another turning to the North but the white horse thunders on even faster. By now you are becoming somewhat annoyed with this headstrong horse. Branches hit you as you gallop through the wood but nothing slows the horse down. Is this some mischief of the Havarines? Will you leap from the horse now and chose your own way or will you stay on and see where he takes you?

Leap off? Turn to **194**.

Stay on? Turn to **22**.

90

You reach down and pick up the golden collar from the sand. As you do so you all but drop it again as you feel a painful pricking sensation in your fingers. You drop it hastily into your pack but realise that, in spite of the unpleasant sensation, the collar is magical and has given you renewed strength. (Gain five Strength points) You make your way to the boat. Turn to **106**.

91

The staircase winds round to the left. You are grateful for this, for if any attacker lurks above, you will have your sword-arm free to defend yourself.

You listen carefully but there is no sound in the darkness. You begin to climb. Occasional pinpoints of light show through the narrow slit windows. Suddenly you strike something with your foot and by the light from one of these slits you see something glinting on the stairway. You pick it up and continue your climb to the top.

Coming out into the daylight, you see that the top of the tower is totally destroyed; you can go no further here. Turn to **99**.

92

Ignoring the hooded stranger's advice, you turn North, following a long, straight road. The woodland on either side becomes more and more dense until soon you are travelling through thick forest. No birds sing; all is eerily quiet. You feel uneasy as if you were being watched. The hair on the back of your neck tingles and you swing round, sword in hand. You turned not a moment too soon. The TREE DEVIL is about to swoop upon you. Its six yellow eyes gleam wickedly and a scaly claw slices the air a hairsbreadth from your face. The TREE DEVIL screams in anger, flaps its leathery wings and attacks again.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
TREE DEVIL	9	12

If you win, turn to **116**.

93

You stride out along the cliffs enjoying the brisk breeze from the sea. The track continues to run East for a while and then turns sharply right and runs inland. You are now heading down quite a steep hill. Below to the right, you notice a small, dark pool. Rainwater has drained into this hollow and remained there, stagnant and foul-smelling. Your track skirts this pool and, just as you are passing by, there is a slithering sound and a sickening stench of decay fills your nostrils. You turn quickly and come face to face with the repulsive SLIME DRAGON.

It draws its dank body from the mud and opens its cavernous jaws. A hissing snarl and a vicious slash from one of its hooked front claws tells you that you have a fight on your hands.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
SLIME DRAGON	11	12

If you win, turn to **192**.

94

You put the box into your pack and set off again, hoping to find the rusted key which will open it somewhere along your way. Turn to **68**.

95

Suddenly you hear mischievous laughter and a creaking sound. A section of the wall swings open to reveal a small spiral staircase hidden within the wall. You leap to your feet and run up the stone steps, out into a large, vaulted hall. Battle honours tattered with age, are draped upon the wall. On chests all around the hall stand many caskets, carved ornaments and other strange and wonderful objects that defy description. Seated in the centre of the room on a large, straight-backed chair which is carved with strange symbols and devices, sits a very small and very wrinkled old man. Turn to **8**.

96

Sure enough, at the bottom of the steep hill the road swings left over the stone bridge across the river. Almost immediately afterwards, you come to a junction. A road joins you from the right. This however, you recognise as the way you came before, so you keep straight ahead, though the track is now becoming more and more entangled with brambles. Turn to **134**.

97

The moaning wind increases in volume. There is evil here, you decide and back away from the dreadful rock figures, never taking your eyes off them for an instant. When you reach the edge of the plateau you turn and hurry away down the steep track. Hearing a rumbling behind you, you turn in time to see a great avalanche of boulders rolling and rumbling down the hillside. There is no escape. Tons of rubble, earth and massive boulders envelope you in a suffocating flood. This is the end of your quest.

98

Gasping and battle-scarred, you lean on a rock to recover. Then, heaving your sword from the carcass, you stagger back to the last junction. That detour was definitely a mistake. Turn to **149**.

99

You pause briefly to catch your breath after the long climb and take the opportunity to look at the object you discovered on the stairs. What you took at first to be a cheap trinket now reveals itself to be a gold pendant, heavily encrusted with jewels of every colour. Inscribed in the gold surround are the words 'THOUGH WISDOM CANNOT BE GOTTEN FOR GOLD, STILL LESS CAN BE GOTTEN WITHOUT IT.'

You have a curious sensation as you hold the pendant in your hand. It feels almost as though it is alive. It is not a pleasant feeling. And yet the inscription is intriguing. Is there perhaps some wisdom to be had here that will aid you in your quest? Perhaps this evil-feeling thing is a vital clue, or is it a trick?

Will you take the strange but sinister pendant or will you throw it away?

Take it? Turn to **20**.
Throw it away? Turn to **152**.

100

You leave the horses and walk on. Pleasant grassy meadows stretch on either side. The sun is hot and the road long and dusty and after some time you begin to wonder if it would have been better to borrow a horse. However, at last you see a wooded area ahead and another road which joins you from the right. Will you continue West or take this road to the North?

West? Turn to **32**.
North? Turn to **201**.

101

A little further on you find your way blocked by undergrowth and thick briar. Drawing your sword you begin to try and hack a pathway through the tangled briars. But no matter how hard you try, you can make no impression on the strange briar patch which seems to be growing thicker even as you watch. There is nothing for it but to turn back to the junction and go West. Turn to **38**.

102

You reach out and snatch the knife greedily from the woodman's hand and hold it threateningly, daring him to take it back. The woodman merely shrugs his shoulders and turns away. Then, looking at your prize, you realise you have been tricked. In your hand is nothing but a scrap of rusted metal which crumbles to red dust as you watch. You fling it angrily from you and turn South again. Turn to **4**.

103

As you turn to leave there is a low rumbling and grating sound. You look up in alarm and see that a large section on the rock face is crumbling and falling. Too late you begin to run but the rocks fall relentlessly. You seem to hear shrieks of evil laughter echoing around the quarry. Then the rocks crash down on you and you know no more. Your adventure and your life are at an end.

104

You put the silver chalice into your pack and continue North through the cobweb covered woods. Turn to **5**.

105

Remembering the curious effect it had on you when you picked it up, you think that this gift might well be precious indeed. You handle it very carefully as you lift it from your pack.

As soon as he sees it the old man clutches the arms of his chair and strains forward as if to rise but cannot manage it. "Give it to me," he gasps, his eyes wide and desperate. You hand it to him and as soon as he touches it a curious transformation occurs. Turn to **78**.

106

Taking the little boat you push off from the shore and set off downstream. It is easy rowing for a while until the river widens into an estuary. Here it becomes a little choppy and you are not making much headway. In fact you think you may even be going backwards. Obviously the river is tidal and the tide must be on the way in. You decide to head for the North shore as quickly as possible. You beach the boat on a spit of sand. You splash through the waves as you pull the boat to shore, looking up at the towering cliffs above you.

Suddenly you hear a rattling of stones and have an overwhelming sense of danger. You leap for the shore, letting go of the boat. You moved not a moment too soon for the huge claw of a GIANT CRAB snaps at the air inches from your face. The huge pincers snap again and this time fasten upon your boot. Desperately you try to free yourself and, drawing your sword, you lunge at the huge, armoured body as it towers above you. There must surely be some vulnerable place where your sword could strike home. It is now a life and death struggle.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
GIANT CRAB	10	12

If you beat the crab, turn to **188**.

107

The path twists this way and that through the marshland and now appears to be heading North. A path joins you from the West but, remembering what the man told you, you press on North. On your left now is grassland, while to your right is still the marsh. After a time you come to a crossroads but, again remembering what the man in the marsh said, you go North. Turn to **70**.

108

A weather-beaten figure sits on the quayside. He seems, uncannily, to know what is in your thoughts without a word being spoken.

"Six pieces of gold I will take to charter my boat?" he says, "She's a tidy craft and will take you anywhere you wish to go."

Somewhat surprised, you hand over the six gold pieces and follow the captain aboard his ship. It is a fishing boat and not, as. far as you can see, quite such a 'tidy craft' as you have been led to suppose. However, silencing your doubts, you set sail across the bay. Turn to **173**.

GH
87

109

You leave the crumpled body of the spider and try to make your way forward. However, it is soon clear that the path merely leads to the spider's lair. Surrounding you in the thick, musty-smelling web are the desiccated corpses of animals and men from which the spider has sucked the vital juices. Other mummified corpses have been left intact for the spider to eat at its leisure. With a shudder of horror, you leave the dreadful 'larder' and return South through the woods. You pass the body of the dead axe-man and come to the junction again.

One road continues South, another turns East. Suddenly, a huge flock of white birds flutter from the trees around you and wheel around to the left, heading East. You take this as a sign and follow them. Turn to **55**.

110

You pick your way carefully across the stones. Some of them feel very insecure. In the middle, with the water swirling round you, your foot slips and you fall into the river. It is not deep, however, and you wade ashore with nothing worse than a wetting.

A man in rags appears on the opposite bank and, fawningly tries to help you out, of the water. You have no need of assistance but the man obviously expects something from you.

"I am a poor man. I am starving," he pleads, "I have eaten nothing for many days. Spare me food."

Do you have food to spare? Will you believe this beggar or is he another Havarine trickster? If you decide to ignore him you continue East, until the road swings South and comes to a junction; to the West you see the river you have just crossed, so you turn left and follow the road East.

Ignore him? Turn to **88**.
Give him food? Turn to **140**.

111

You continue North along the broad road. There are now trees on either side of you. Soon you come to a junction. To your left is a track running West through even more dense woodland. You are just deciding whether to go West or continue North when . . . Turn to **197**.

112

You hesitantly stretch out your hand to take the bundle of leaves, murmuring your thanks as you do so. The leaves taste bitter and their smell is offensive. Was this a mistake, you wonder. However, you soon begin to feel the beneficial effects. Your sore and tired limbs feel refreshed. You thank the old woman and return to the junction. Gain three Strength points. Turn to **200**.

113

Exhausted, you step back from the crumpled corpse. You see the pendant still clasped in the claw-like hand. You decide to take it back but when you try to remove it from the SHE-DEVIL's fingers, the pendant disintegrates at your touch leaving nothing but golden dust.

You sheath your sword and stagger out into the daylight. Retracing your steps to the crossroads, you take the road North, hopefully towards Adonerath. Turn to **157**.

114

The passage is wide but not lit with the blue glow. It is difficult to see where you are putting your feet. Far ahead, however, is a small, bright patch of daylight. You are coming out of the cave system. Turn to **174**.

115

You search in your pack and produce the rusty key given you by the old man on the island. Eagerly you fit it in the lock and, after a little effort, the key turns and the box opens. You are somewhat disappointed by what you find. No treasure here; no precious gift for Zermahaar. Just a small stone tablet inscribed like this:

"Hurry on your way now stranger," says the old woman. "When the time is right, this may be of great value to you." You mumble your thanks, put the stone tablet and its box into your pack and turn East again. Turn to **68**.

116

You press on North through the forest. The woodland is less dense now and to your left you can see a wild and hilly moorland. Presently you come to a junction. One road runs West over the moor, the other continues North. Which way will you go?

North? Turn to **128**.
West? Turn to **38**.

117

You make your way down to the bridge and, very gingerly, step onto the swaying, rotten structure. Each step makes the single rope creak and strain. Occasionally pieces of the slatted wooden base of the rope bridge break beneath your feet and go tumbling down into the river below. You hope you will not be following them. You edge slowly along. Nearly there. At last you are almost within reach of the far side when a figure emerges from the trees opposite. He is rather a haughty youth with a sneering look on his face. He holds a sword in his hand.

"It costs two gold pieces to cross my bridge," he calls mockingly, "Unless you'd prefer to fight."

Will you pay up or fight?

Fight? Turn to **34**.
Pay up? Turn to **141**.

118

You turn North. The mist is a little clearer here but there are no signs of life except for the occasional water bird. From time to time, however, you hear strange sucking, squelching noises from somewhere ahead. You notice the birds immediately take to the air when these sounds are heard.

You hear the noise again, much nearer now. You stop and scan the marshes to your left. Turn to **67**.

119

You are confident your gift will find favour and present it to Zermahaar. He turns it this way and that, holds it up to the light and squints at it. Finally he pushes it disdainfully from his knees to the floor.

"What would I want with this bauble?" he asks at last, "Guards, show this fool."

Four armed guards approach and, at a gesture from Zermahaar, they begin to unlock chest after chest. Each is full of similar gaudy treasures, far bigger and better than your gift.

"Now kill this rogue," says Zermahaar, turning his back on you.

You have made the wrong choice. You have failed in your quest.

120

You follow the track into the quarry. After some time it comes to an end in front of a sheer rock face. You are surrounded on all sides by sheer rock. Suddenly you notice a small opening at the base of the rock. It appears to be a cave entrance.

You cautiously peer into the darkness. The noise of tumbling rock startles you. Is the cave about to collapse? Should you risk going inside or return to the main path and go East?

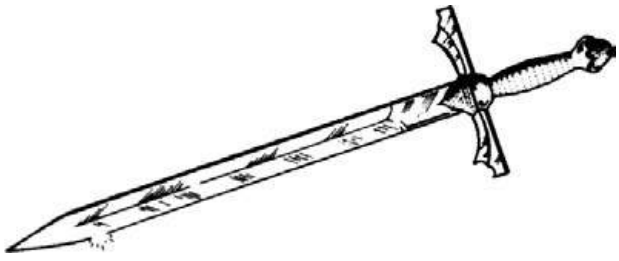
Examine cave? Turn to **65**.
Return and go East? Turn to **103**.

121

With great difficulty you manage to take the rope from your pack for by now you are sinking almost up to your chest. There is a tree stump nearby. You make a noose at the end of the rope and try to throw it over the stump. After several misses you manage to throw the noose over the stump and slowly and laboriously drag yourself, wet and stinking, from the bog. You are exhausted (lose three strength points). You rest briefly and then, after tidying yourself up as best you can, make your way back to the path, leaving the rope behind. Turn to **161**.

122

The road continues South for a time with fields to your right and marshland to your left. Presently you are joined by another track from the West. Having no wish to go back on your tracks, you continue South. You find the track is now beginning to bear away to the East. Turn to **154**.



123

Zermahaar offers you food and drink and, when you have finished, he sets you on your way again to Dalgolath.

Your mission is nearly ended. You have the healing fluid and the sword of ruin which will save a kingdom. You smile to yourself. Turn to **202**.

124

You heave vines and foliage out of the way, being careful not to break off any stems. To your intense relief, the vegetation is not too thick here and quite soon you come out onto a clear path running North/South. North runs through more of the evil jungle. It is the path you took before. South leads back to a junction. You recognise it. To the East is the ruined fort; to the West the road runs through fields beside the river. Not wishing to return to the ruined castle you turn West. Turn to **76**.

125

The deck is a shambles. You wearily sheath your sword after wiping it clean. Gradually sailors appear from their hiding places and come to shake your hand and pat you on the back. Of the sea-monster nothing remains but a few silvery scales. The rest has disappeared beneath the waves. Somewhat shaken, the crew put the ship to rights as best they can and the rest of the voyage passes uneventfully. At last you reach the island. The fishing boat drops anchor and you are ferried in a small dinghy. Turn to **85**.

126

As you dismount you notice a small track off to the East, you follow the man into the dark interior of the cottage, stooping to pass through the low doorway. Inside, the room is filled with curios of all kinds, including several objects of strangely wrought design. One piece in particular catches your eye.

"The silver chalice," you say, pointing to it, "What are those curious designs on it?"

"Ah," says the man, "I see you have an eye for the unusual. It was made by the Elvin people of the Korowan valley. Those are magical symbols. I expect the chalice was used in one of their mystic rituals. I would gladly exchange it for your horse."

Will you trade with the man or ride on your way?

Trade? Turn to **175**.
Ride on? Turn to **24**.

127

The leech is dead. You clean your sword and, wiping the slime from your clothes, you continue to follow the path North. Soon you come to a junction. To your left a track runs West, while to the North the path still follows the river. Over the river is a small bridge leading East. Which way will you go?

West? Turn to **195**.
North? Turn to **84**.
East? Turn to **148**.

128

You walk on to the edge of the wood. On your right is a woodman's hut. A man is sitting outside carving a piece of wood. Almost magically, it seems, the wood is transformed into the beautiful figure of a. woman with long flowing hair and a laughing, captivating face.

"You have a skill to be proud of," you say.

The woodman looks sideways at you and smiles.

"The skill is not in me but in the blade," he says, "This blade has many qualities, oh yes indeed! It cuts whatever substance you care to name; it even cuts truth from falsehood. A goodly knife indeed!"

You are seized with a desire to possess this knife. The woodman studies you carefully while he carves.

"Five pieces of gold and the knife is yours," he says.

If you have enough gold, will you buy the knife, will you seize it from him or go on your way without it?

Buy? Turn to **137**.
Seize it? Turn to **51**.
Go without? Turn to **101**.

129

The track soon begins to run up a steep hill. You toil upwards, wondering when you will reach the top. The hill had not looked so high from below. At last you reach the top. Turn to **50**.

130

You follow the coast road for quite some time enjoying the scenery and the sound of the waves breaking against the rocky shore. You pass one or two deserted fishermen's cottages. The road gradually deteriorates into a stony track which keeps close to the shore. On your right are cliffs rising grey and forbidding. There is nothing here but the sea on one side and cliffs on the other. Suddenly you stop. You are not able to go any further as part of the cliff has broken away and completely blocked the path.

As you turn to retrace your steps you are aware of something grey and wrinkled clinging to the rock face. It is the SCALY ROCK CLINGER, a gigantic winged reptile with cruel-looking claws and a mouth full of very sharp and pointed teeth. The beast launches itself from the cliff face and swoops towards you, spreading its clawed hind feet like massive hands to clutch at you. You dodge and manage to avoid their grasp but those fierce jaws snap only inches from your face. You draw your sword.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
SCALY ROCK CLINGER	8	10

If you win, turn to **25**.

131

There is woodland on both sides now. The trees are very close together making the wood appear dark and sinister. You hurry on your way. To your left you hear the sound of an axe. Someone is at work in the forest.

As you continue, the sounds of chopping become more distinct and soon you see who wields the axe. A huge man is standing beside the road. Around him are trees indiscriminately hacked and mangled. The man is just swinging the axe wildly and striking at anything. One look at his face tells you the madness has struck here too.

The huge man sees you and, with a frenzied snarl, hurls himself towards you, the axe raised to strike. You hastily draw your sword to defend yourself as best you can against this deranged woodman.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
MAD AXE-MAN	7	14

If you win, turn to **169**.

132

You push through the undergrowth. The trees grow so closely together that the light cannot penetrate and it is quite dark and cold. Suddenly you hear anguished cries and roars of rage. There is a clanging, rattling sound too that puzzles you. What lies ahead? You draw your sword. Then, bursting through the trees comes a dreadful figure: a giant of a creature, hardly a man. He is enormous and his eyes glint with manic rage. Each massive wrist is manacled and a length of heavy chain hangs beneath the giant hands. With a roar of fury, the CHAINED OGRE launches himself at you, swinging the heavy chains with devastating accuracy.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
CHAINED OGRE	8	12

If you win, turn to **19**.

133

Annoyed, you carry on over the rough open plain. The road turns to right and left between outcrops of rock. You trudge on for a long and weary way. At last you come to a junction; a road joins yours from the South. It looks vaguely familiar. Suddenly you realize why the hooded stranger called you a fool. The road South leads back to Dalgolath, the starting point of your journey. Furious with yourself, you turn back and retrace your steps to the crossroads. Turn to **145**.

134

You draw your sword and hack a path through the tangled undergrowth. On and on you struggle. As you progress, the brambles seem to close over again behind you tighter than ever. There is no going back. You are exhausted by your efforts (lose two strength points) and feel you can go no further, when at last you come out into the open again.

Close by on your left is a woodman's hut. The woodman is sitting outside carving a piece of wood. Almost magically, it seems, the wood is transformed into the beautiful figure of a woman with long flowing hair and a captivating face. "You have a skill to be proud of," you say.

The woodman looks sideways at you and smiles.

"The skill is not in me but in the blade," he says, "This blade has many qualities, oh yes indeed! It cuts whatever substance you care to name; it even cuts truth from falsehood," he says, "A goodly knife indeed."

You are seized with a desire to possess this knife.

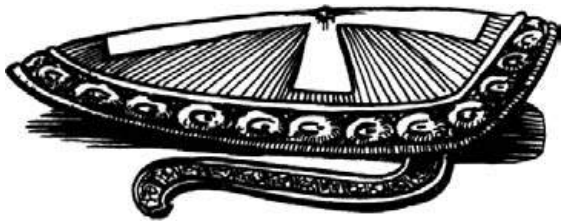
"Five pieces of gold is my price," says the woodman, seeming to guess your thoughts.

If you have enough gold will the buy the knife? Will you seize it from the woodman, or go on your way without it?

Buy?	Turn to **196**.
Seize?	Turn to **102**.
Go without?	Turn to **4**.

135

You wrap yourself in the cloak and step boldly into the cave. Picking up a small stone, you toss it back down the passage. It clatters and echoes in the dark. The trolls look alarmed and two rush off to see who or what has made the sound. The third places the jewel carefully on the ground and, picking up a short sword in each of his hairy hands, he stalks around the cave sniffing the air suspiciously. You tiptoe past him and seize the jewel from the pile of treasure and hide it under your cloak. The troll whirls round, confused. You slip past him and away down the passage. You hear him howl with rage when he realises his jewel is gone. The other trolls are down the tunnel by which you first entered the cave system. You hear them returning so you quickly take the tunnel East and walk towards the daylight at the end of the tunnel. You roll up the cloak and return it to your pack. Turn to **174**.



136

When you have recovered your breath, you sheath your sword, pick up your pack which fell to the ground during the fight, and stagger on your way North. Soon you come to a junction. To the West the road runs through trees into a clearing but goes no further. To the East it runs steeply uphill. Will you go East or West?

East? Turn to **200**.
West? Turn to **77**.

137

You hand over five gold pieces and take the knife. You turn it over once or twice in your hand. It feels good. You turn to thank the woodman but find that he is gone. You continue North.

Soon you come to a very overgrown part of the road. Thick briars, strong and sinuous, bar your way. You will have to cut them to get through. You think this will be a good chance to try out the knife.

Taking the knife, you slash at the nearest briar. Not only does the briar remain unharmed, the blade breaks clean off the knife. You have been deceived. Turn to **49**.

138

You take hold of the mighty golden sword and lift the heavy weapon from its resting place. The sound of the wind has increased in intensity and a flash of lightning takes you by surprise. As thunder rolls and lightning flickers, you become aware that the rock figures have closed ranks. They surround .you now and the circle is coming closer. You wave the sword threateningly but the giant stones still advance, the keening of the wind becomes deafeningly loud. Stone arms reach out to hold you fast and hundreds of tons of stone advance to crush the life from you. You should not have taken their sword.

139

You press on South, noticing that the woodland is now giving way to open country. Soon you find yourself on bleak, open moorland. The road is now rough and stony and wisps of hill mist swirl around you. The mist gradually thickens until you can hardly see the ground in front of you. You stumble on for what seems an age. Will this mist never clear? Turn to **160**.

140

The man's body is certainly emaciated and his cheeks hollow with hunger. You take food from your pack and give it to him. He falls on it ravenously. "A thousand thanks," he mumbles between mouthfuls, "You will not regret it."

You shoulder your pack and begin to walk on. After a moment or two you hear footsteps behind you. It is the starving man again.

"For your kindness," he says, dumping what appears to be a bundle of rags into your hands, "A cloak of invisibility," he says eagerly, "You may have need of it."

Then he turns and hurries away. Somewhat surprised, you walk on East. Eventually the road swings South and comes to a junction. To the West you can see some way away, the river you have just crossed. You turn left and follow the road East. Turn to **88**.

141

You cautiously haul yourself onto firm ground, very much aware of the impertinent youth's sword tip hovering dangerously near your throat. You open your pack and hand over two gold pieces. The youth takes the coins and removes his sword from your throat. Apparently satisfied, he nods briefly and disappears among the trees.

There is only one road. It runs South through a wood. You set off down this road and presently come to a junction. The road South is joined by another running East through more woodland. Which way will you go?

East? Turn to **43**.
South? Turn to **139**.

142

Shrugging your shoulders, you retrace your steps to the cavern and take the other passage leading South. Turn to **86**.

143

Annoyed by his sniggering, you push the Elvin creature to the ground and seize the bottle. The dwarf lies gasping in the dirt but makes no move to take it back. Turn to **164**.

144

You find yourself in a small, cell-like room. A little daylight filters through a grid in the ceiling, you can see that weeds and mosses have grown over the grid making the light rather green and eerie. In the gloom you catch sight of something in the corner. It appears to be a bundle of old rags. As you approach, however, you see that it is more than just old rags. It is all that remains of a traveller like yourself. A whitened skull leers from beneath the hooded cloak and the bones of an arm and hand protrude pathetically from the ragged sleeve. Beneath the outstretched hand there is a crumpled piece of parchment. You gently lift it from the skeleton hand. "Do not go North," it says.

Will you take the advice of the dead traveller or ignore it?

Take advice? Turn to **42**.
Ignore it? Turn to **182**.

145

You are a little angry with yourself for wasting time. To your left is the road North down which you have already travelled. To your right is a smaller road South and ahead is a broad and pleasant road East. Will you go South or East?

South? Turn to **48**.
East? Turn to **11**.

146

As soon as the pill is in your mouth, you feel a great sense of well-being. (Gain four strength points)

"I fear I have led you from your way," says the old man, "Return to the path but remember the way ahead is not easy. Keep your sword ready. Good fortune go with you." He turns and shambles away into the forest. Turn to **183**.

147

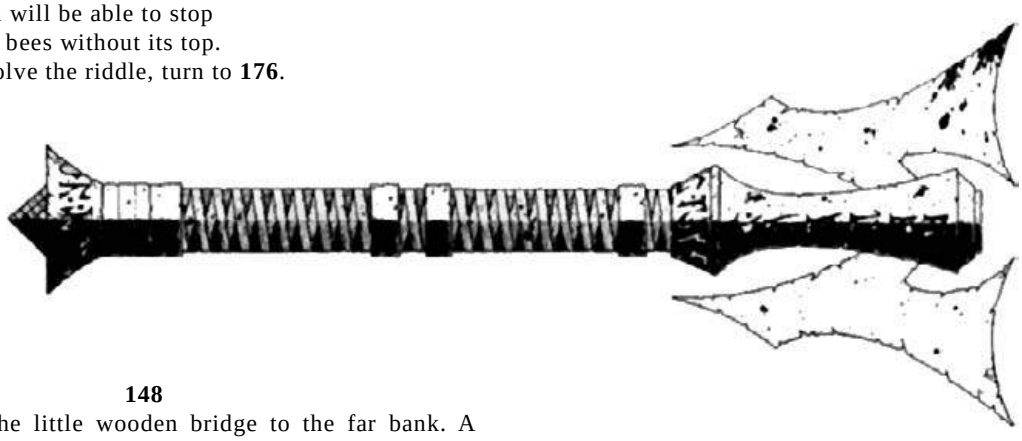
The castle of Adonerath stands before you at last. There is a massive studded door which towers above you. There is a small doorway cut in it at the left-hand side and this is open. You step through and into a quiet courtyard. Many doors lead from the courtyard. You try a few but they are all locked.

"Hello!" you call, "Is anyone there?" Your voice echoes round the courtyard but no-one answers. You try another door and this one opens. The room beyond is small and empty but for a small table and chair. There is a sheet of parchment on the table. A clue, you think and step inside to have a look. The door clangs shut behind you. Nothing you do can persuade it to open again. Disgusted with yourself for being so careless, you stamp across the room and grab the parchment, hoping it will be of some use to you.

This is what you see written on it:–

Take the tail of lion,
The heart of a skink,
Add a trap for fish
And for insects I think.
Add them all to the start of year
And now perhaps, the beginning of fear.
Soon now you will be able to stop
At a home for bees without its top.

If you can't solve the riddle, turn to **176**.



148

You walk over the little wooden bridge to the far bank. A road leads East over flat and marshy ground. Far ahead you can see it will become much steeper, rising into hills. After some distance you notice a small track to your left. It looks insignificant and you decide to ignore it, and follow the main route. Turn to **88**.

149

The track through the valley continues West. The hillside is rocky and bleak. The road now turns South again and, to your surprise, leads straight into a huge cavern. Your footsteps echo and you hear the steady dripping of water from stalactites hanging from the rock above. It is cold but, surprisingly, not too dark. You are just able to see your way ahead. Now you have a choice. There are two ways ahead, one to the West and one to the South. Which way will you go?

West?	Turn to	**63**.
South?	Turn to	**86**.

150

The stony road West continues through open grassland. Far ahead wooded hills can be seen. Soon you come to a fork in the road. Should you continue West or take the track North?

West?	Turn to	**75**.
North?	Turn to	**21**.

151

Picking up the jewel and thrusting it into your pack you, rather guiltily, creep out of the cave and back along the passage. You pass the entrance to the passage by which you entered the cave system and proceed East. Eventually you come to the cave mouth. Turn to **174**.

152

The feeling of evil is strong. You take the pendant, beautiful though it is, and hurl it into the ravine. As it disappears from view you make your way back down the staircase. Turn to **66**.

153

You walk Eastwards over the hill. It is pleasant up here with only the larks for company. After some time the road swings to the left and you now find yourself travelling North. After a little more climbing you reach the top of the hill. Below you can see a small fishing port in a sheltered bay. Away to the West you can see the island again and to the East, wooded hills.

It is all downhill now and you are soon standing in the main street of the little fishing port. To your right a road runs East. Ahead of you a road runs Northwards along the coast, while here in the harbour are many boats. Could one of these be chartered to take you West to the island? Which way will you go?

Charter a boat to the island?	Turn to	**108**.
East?	Turn to	**41**.
North?	Turn to	**130**.

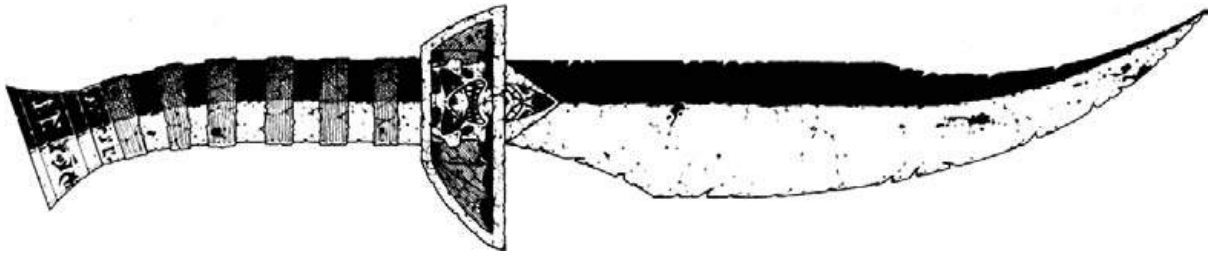
154

The track is narrow and turns this way and that through dank and foul-smelling marshland. You suspect that any deviation from the track, which now leads Eastwards could lead to disaster in the black, peaty bog. Ribbons of mist drift over the marsh making it more and more difficult to see the way ahead. Suddenly, to your left, you hear a voice shouting for help. Peering through the mist you can just make out a pathetic figure trapped to his waist in the treacherous bog. He calls again for help. If you had a rope to throw to him you might be able to pull him to safety. Do you still have the rope in your pack?

Yes?	Turn to	**80**.
No?	Turn to	**170**.

155

Regretting the time and energy you have wasted coming on this fool's errand, you turn around and make your way back through the barren, rocky valley, and back through the evil-smelling vegetation. At least the way will be clear now, you think. However, it soon becomes obvious that the pathway you had cleared previously has now become even more



densely overgrown than before. The foliage has sprung back and blocked the way again. You struggle to make your way through yet again. In your efforts, you accidentally bruise some of the leaves and stems. Even this is enough to release the soporific vapours. Almost without realising it, you are overcome by the same lethargic fatigue you experienced before. This time you are too weak to resist. Life becomes a mere dream and you slide from reality for ever.

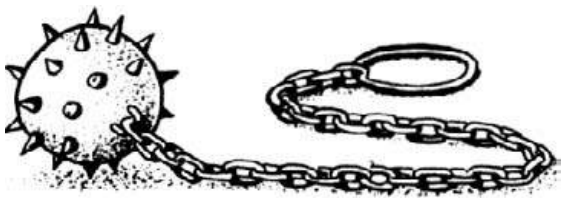
156

You continue West through the wood which becomes darker and more overgrown. At last the road turns sharply right and begins to run North. You continue deeper and deeper into the forest. From time to time you think you see movements in the undergrowth and hear small sounds. You are uneasy. Then ahead of you on the path appear two slender figures. They are WOOD SPRITES. Their bodies are sinuous like young saplings. Their pointed ears twitch and the look on their sly faces suggests they are up to no good. Two more appear behind you. They carry long, tapering swords which they wave menacingly.

You draw your sword and turn sideways so as to have all four of them in view. The first two catch you by surprise and throw a net. You struggle to free yourself from the mesh and manage to get partly free; lose two Dexterity points. But by now they are attacking from both sides with their swords.

WOOD SPRITE	*Dexterity*	*Strength*
1st SPRITE	5	8
2nd SPRITE	4	8
3rd SPRITE	3	6
4th SPRITE	3	6

If you win, turn to **73**.



157

The road runs North along the floor of a wide valley. Though the greenery here is lush, there seems to be no attempt at cultivation. The whole area is a wild mass of luxuriant growth. From time to time you have to use your sword to cut your way through thick fleshy plants which have grown out over the road. You notice a peculiar smell as you chop the vegetation out of your way. You also begin to feel extremely tired and lightheaded, but decide you cannot afford the time to rest. Turn to **81**.

158

"Ha Ha!" says Zermahaar with a cruel laugh. "Guards! To the dungeon with our bold friend here. You will have many years to work upon the problem-the rest of your life in fact."

The door of your prison clangs shut. You have lived your last hour of freedom.

159

The wolves lie dead at your feet. You now see that the victim of their attack is an old man. He takes a few steps towards you, then collapses on the ground. You take your water bottle from your pack and give him a drink. He gulps the water gratefully and then gestures feebly towards a leather pouch at his waist. You open if for him. Inside are some small, grey pills. He puts two into his mouth and closes his eyes. In a moment or two he opens them again and sits up, obviously much refreshed.

He thanks you and, holding out the pills, gestures that you should take one. Will you take one or not?

Take one? Turn to **146**.
Refuse? Turn to **183**.

160

You are feeling ahead with your hands now and testing each step carefully. There seems to have been some violent earth movement in this area. Through the mist you can just make out large cracks in the ground. They look deep; you do not want to put your foot in one.

The mist totally encloses you now, you cannot see a yard ahead of you. You walk on very slowly. Suddenly you hear a grumbling groaning noise. The ground trembles and you feel movement beneath your feet. You try to step back but it is too late. A crack appears in the earth. An enormous, bottomless chasm gapes before you. You are falling. Desperately you claw at the earth to save yourself but to no avail. Earth and stones crash down with you. Your adventure is over. You are hurtling to your death in the bowels of the earth.

161

You continue East through the misty marsh. Ahead you see the river. Soon you come to a T-junction. Will you take the path North along the river bank or go South?

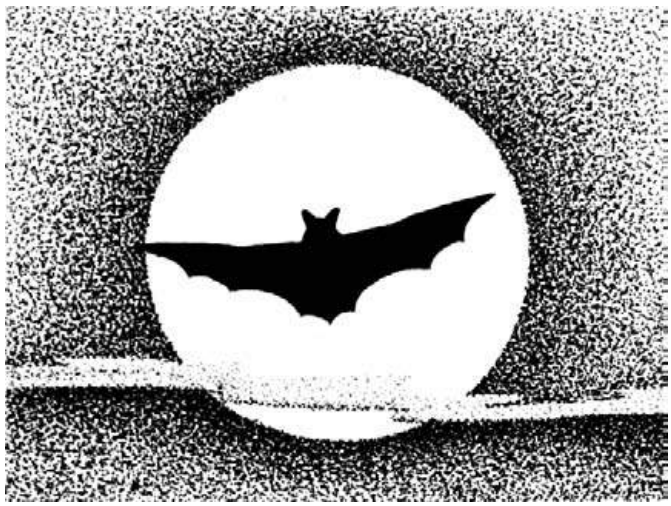
North? Turn to **118**.
South? Turn to **83**.

162

The birds swoop down upon you. There are three of them in all and their accuracy is deadly.

BIRDS OF PREY	*Dexterity*	*Strength*
1st BIRD	10	10
2nd BIRD	9	9
3rd BIRD	8	8

If by any chance you should survive, turn to **147**.



163

Recovering your breath, you wearily stumble on through the dark, dense forest, peering to the right and left and even behind you in case another enemy should be approaching. After a while, to your intense relief, the trees begin to thin out and you find yourself in pleasant meadowland. You begin to relax and enjoy the pleasant scenery.

Soon you come to a crossroads. The new road which joins yours is broad and looks well used. To the West it appears to head out onto open moorland, while to the East it runs through lush green meadows.

Will you turn East or West or will you continue South?

East?Turn to **11**.
West? Turn to **191**.
South? Turn to **48**.

164

With the bottle ready in your hand, you begin to hack your way through the vegetation. Whenever the evil vapours begin to affect you, you take a small sniff at the bottle. Sure enough, the smelling bottle revives you. You make quite good progress alternately hacking and sniffing. After a while, however, you begin to feel some discomfort in your shoulder and back. Then your legs do not appear to be moving quite as they should. You look at your sword arm and notice with horror that it has become twisted. Your other arm you find is totally immovable. Too late you realise that you have become as deformed as the dwarf. Soon you are totally unable to move. The evil vapours from the vegetation finally overcome you and release you from your now useless body.

165

You look at the castle across the ravine and back at the ruined fort again. There is really no comparison. The larger must be Adonerath so why waste time here? You turn around and go back down to the cross-roads. You can go North, turn to **157**. Or go back West, turn to **76**.

166

As you walk on, the tunnel widens and, by the light of the blue glow, you notice there are many strange footprints in the sandy floor of the passage. You wonder what manner of creature made those prints.

At last the passage ends. Two wide passages lead to left and right. Which will you chose?

Left? Turn to **199**.
Right? Turn to **114**.

167

Dimly you remember the voice in the cave and desperately try to move your freezing fingers to work the She-devil's pendant along the chain into your hand. Your movements are slow and becoming increasingly difficult. At last, however, you feel the solid form touching your hand. Warmth begins to spread from it. You are now able to grasp it firmly. Where once its touch was unpleasant, now it is life itself. Gradually you are restored to life. Still shivering, you look gratefully at the pendant in your hand. It is a pendant no longer-just a twisted lump of metal with the shattered crystals of what once were gem stones. You lay it reverently on the ground and leave the cave. Turn to **71**.

168

You take a gold piece from your pouch and leave it by the road in payment for the loan of the horse. Then you untie the black horse and mount up. The horse prances and snorts as you mount and tosses his head, but he is responsive to your firm control and you are soon cantering along the track which is now smooth and grassy. Ahead you can see a wooded area and it seems your road is shortly to be joined by another from the right.

With the wind in your hair, the sun bright and a good horse beneath you, you are thoroughly enjoying yourself when suddenly, for no apparent reason, the horse shies. His eyes roll in fear. He rears up and wheels to the right and gallops away along the road to the North. You attempt to stop the animal's headlong flight but he is uncontrollable. You are vaguely aware of a turning on your left running into the wood which borders this road on the left-hand side. Shortly afterwards you see a figure standing in the road ahead of you. You shout a warning whilst still struggling to control the terrified animal. The figure does not move out of the way but holds up his hand and calmly commands the horse to stop. The black horse slows down and stands, foam-flecked, flanks heaving.

"A fine horse," says the man, taking the horse by the bridle and leading him quietly at a walk to cool him down. "Are you willing to part with him? I have many fine things I could exchange. If you think my poor offerings are of any value I would gladly exchange one of them. Will you come to my cottage and see?"

Will you go with the man or will you ride on North?

Go to the cottage? Turn to **126**.
Ride on? Turn to **24**.

169

You stand for a moment, breathing hard. Then, wiping the blood from your sword, you wearily shoulder your pack and trudge Northwards through the forest.

The woods have a silent, dreamlike quality here. Cobwebs lace the trees with cloaks of silver. And what cobwebs-they are huge! Suddenly you notice something silvery glinting in the pine needles at the foot of a tree. You stoop to see what it is. Dusting away the earth, you lift out a silver chalice embossed with strange symbols and designs. Surprisingly,

the silver has not tarnished but is bright and shining. You wonder if it is precious enough to be a gift for Zermahaar. Will you take it or leave it in the forest?

Take it? Turn to **104**.
Leave it? Turn to **5**.

170

With no rope you are powerless to help. You stand undecided. Should you risk death yourself and try to reach him even without a rope? But it is too late now. Even as you stand, the man begins to sink from view in the stinking mud. He gives one last frantic struggle. "Go North!" he gasps faintly. Then the mud closes over him. As he vanishes from sight you feel sickened and helpless. But there is nothing to be done. You turn and continue on your journey.

East? Turn to **30**.
West? Turn to **107**.

171

As if in a trance, you reach into your pack and produce the jewelled pendant. With an anguished cry she grasps it and holds it close. You take a step forward to pass by her on the stairs but another flash of those piercing eyes roots you to the spot.

"Not so fast, thieving human," she hisses, "You shall not leave."

She raises her hand and a shaft of light energy like a glowing sword, bursts from it and nearly knocks you to the ground. You raise your sword. The fight is on.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
SHE-DEVIL	12	12

If you win, turn to 113.

172

Zermahaar, transformed now from a wrinkled old dotard to a tall and strong young man, strides from the room, his cloak billowing behind him. You follow him in a kind of trance. He opens a huge door to another magnificent room. A fire burns welcomingly in the grate. From a cupboard Zermahaar takes a dark-coloured glass bottle and hands it to you.

"One drop only," he warns, "No more. Give it to the king in a glass of pure, clear spring water. He will sleep for three days and when he awakes he will be restored."

You thank him profusely but Zermahaar is already striding from the room. "The others," he shouts over his shoulder, "there should be enough for all who are afflicted. Come!" Turn to **46**.

173

As you approach the middle of the bay you notice the captain and one or two of the crew peering anxiously over the water. You look too but can see nothing except what seems to be a small rock well to the West o£ the boat's course. But as you watch the 'rock' appears to grow. It is moving towards the boat. Soon other bumps appear on the surface of the water. Then suddenly, right under the bows of the ship, a huge and fearsome head bursts from the water with a terrifying hissing roar. Fierce red eyes gleaming and water dripping from its fangs, the sea-monster lunges at the boat, snapping its jaws and snorting. One of the sailors is caught in those terrible jaws. He struggles desperately to free himself as you leap forward, sword at the ready to do battle with the dreaded SEA-MONSTER.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
SEA-MONSTER	9	12

If you win, turn to **125**.

174

You emerge into the daylight, blinking at its brightness. You find yourself on a steep mountain side. A narrow track runs North, hugging the mountain. You follow it. On your left is sheer rock; on your right the ground drops away steeply for hundreds of feet into the valley below. From time to time loose stones you dislodge as you walk rattle away down over the edge. You keep well to the left, hoping you will not be following them. The path twists and turns, sometimes bearing West, then North again, following the curve of the mountain. The path becomes dangerously narrow. At last it comes to an end altogether. In front of you is a wall of rock. You peer to your right at the dreadful drop. Is there no way through? You look again at the rock face and see it has letters carved upon it. You can just make out the strange message:

PDA JQIXAN KB ZWUO EJ IWU
SEHH HAWZ UKQ KJ UKQN SWU

Have you the key to the cypher?
If you do not have the key turn to **79**.

175

You place the silver chalice carefully in your pack and, bidding the cottager farewell, consider which road you should take. Will you continue North or will you take the smaller road East?

North? Turn to **111**.
East? Turn to **28**.

176

You toss the paper on the floor in disgust, making no sense of it. Suddenly there is a grumbling, grating sound. It seems to be coming from all around you. You glance to right and left then gasp, unable to believe your eyes. The room is getting smaller. The walls are actually closing in on you. Slowly but inexorably they advance. You try to wedge them apart with the table but as the walls advance, the table splinters under the crushing force. You spread your arms wide in a frantic attempt to put off the inevitable. You know in your heart it is a useless gesture. The end will come soon.

177

You carefully lift the beautiful jewelled dagger from the dead man's hand. The bones of his fingers fall into a jumbled heap in the sand. Placing the dagger carefully in your pack, you make your way to the boat. Turn to **106**.

178

Remembering how useful it has been to you, you offer your gift to the old man.

"What's this bundle of old rubbish?" he screams.

You try to explain its amazing properties but Zermahaar will not li

"Guar

You ha ed in your quest.

MARK·K·DUNN
87

179

You continue to climb among the peculiar outcrops. They begin to look more and more like huge animals and figures formed from the living rock.

Soon you are on a high plateau and surrounded by more rock figures. They are eerily realistic. You almost feel that the stone eyes are watching you. The path stops in the centre of a group of rock figures at a large rectangular slab like an altar. Something long and shining glints in the sunlight. Stepping closer you see it is a magnificent golden sword. Would this be a worthy gift for Zermahaar? You reach out to touch it. A sudden gust of wind whistling between the stones makes a weird musical sound. You are undecided. Will you take the sword or leave it with the strange rock figures?

Take it? Turn to **138**.
Leave it? Turn to **97**.

180

It is very dark. Tall pines, growing closely together, cut out most of the light from above. The thick carpet of pine-needles deadens the sound of footfalls. No birds sing; all is eerily quiet. You feel uneasy as if you were being watched. The hair on the back of your neck tingles and you swing round, sword in hand. You turned not a moment too soon. The TREE DEVIL is about to swoop upon you. Its six yellow eyes gleam wickedly and a scaly claw slices the air only a hairsbreadth from your face. The TREE DEVIL screams in anger, flaps its leathery wings and attacks again.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
TREE DEVIL	9	11

If you win, turn to **163**.

181

Curious, you stop and take the pendant from your pack and turn it over and over in your hand. You have that same unpleasant feeling that you experienced in the castle. Holding it by its gold chain lessens the effect so, carrying it by the chain, you return to the cavern. Now you take the passage South. Turn to **86**.

182

The warning says you should not go North, but surely that must be the way to Adonerath and the fulfilment of your quest. You may investigate the spiral staircase to the tower, turn to **91**. Otherwise you return down the steep hill to the junction and go North, turn to **157**.

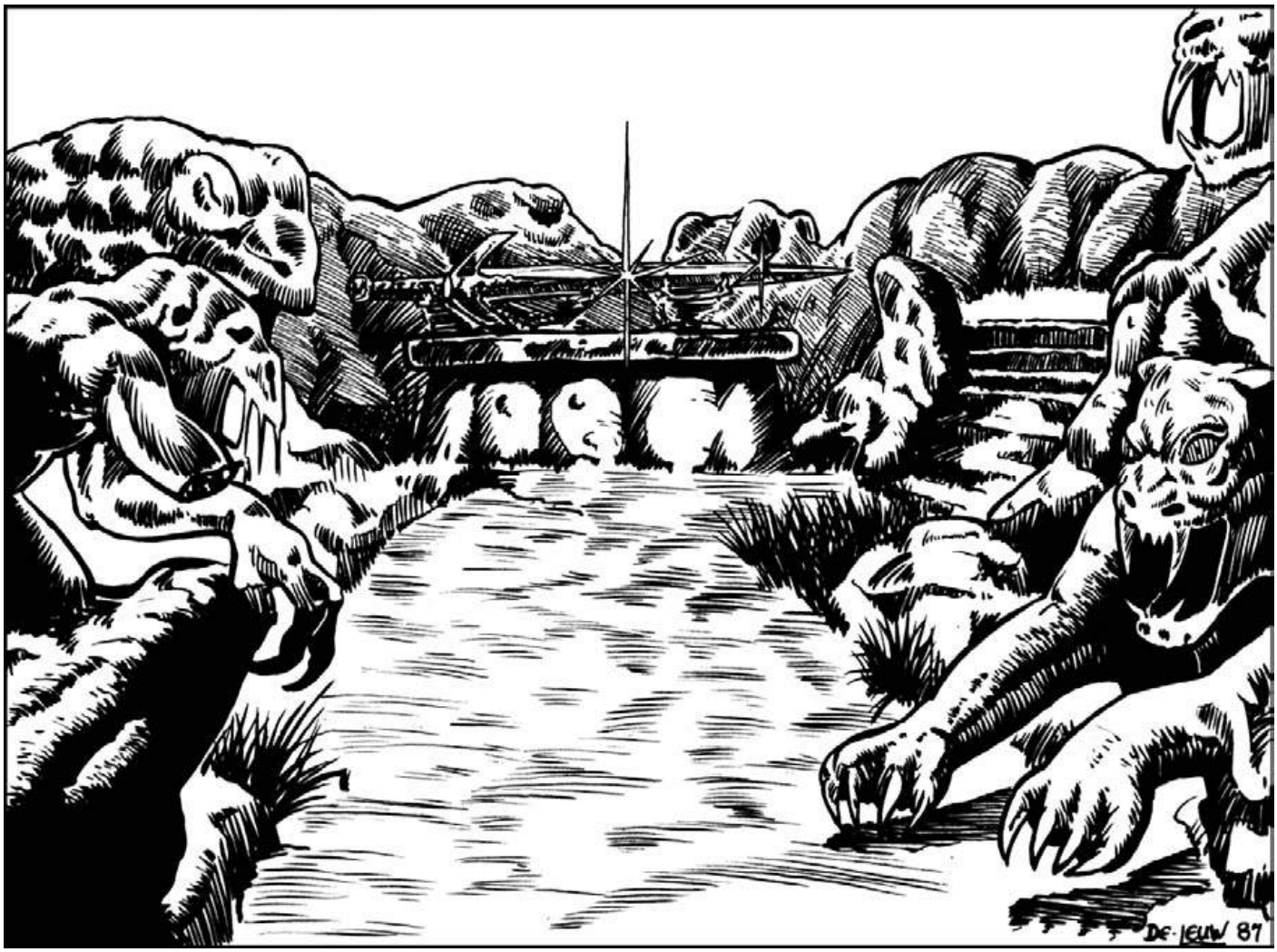
183

You hurry along the road East and soon come out of the woodland. On your left is the river. A well-made road runs North over a stone bridge. A road can be seen on the far side of the river running East along the river bank. To your right, running South is an overgrown track which disappears into a tangle of undergrowth. Will you cross the bridge and go East or turn South?

Cross the bridge? Turn to **27**.
South? Turn to **134**.

184

You hastily pull the rope from your pack and you and the captain manage to bind the damaged mast with collar of rope. It still creaks and groans under the press of wind in the small storm sail, but the hasty repair is just enough to save the craft from disaster. After what seems an age, the fishing boat



limps into the shelter of the harbour and you come thankfully ashore.

Bidding farewell to the captain and crew, you now begin to consider your next move. To your left the road runs North, following the shoreline. Ahead, running East, is a road which leads up over the hill.

Which way will you go?

North? (If you have not been that way before) Turn to **30**.
East? Turn to **41**.

185

You mistrust the sniggering dwarf, believing that all of his race are mischievous trouble-makers, and decide to carry on as you were. Heaving the fleshy stems and foliage out of your way is strenuous work and you are desperately weary in body, but at least your brain in still alert.

Eventually the undergrowth becomes less dense and you find yourself moving more easily along the valley floor. High, rocky hillsides rise steeply now on either side and the path through the valley twists and turns. From time to time you hear strange, echoing calls but can see no other living creature. Warily, you carry on. Turn to **72**.

186

Still weary from the battle with the sea-monster and wondering what perils may lie ahead, you uncork the little bottle and take a sip. The drink tastes pleasantly of honey. You drink more.

Then you begin to feel a burning sensation in your throat and stomach. You gasp for breath and fall writhing to the ground. The last sounds you hear as the fatal poison burns through your body are the manic bursts of laughter as the tattered old man capers around on the sand. Your adventure is over.

187

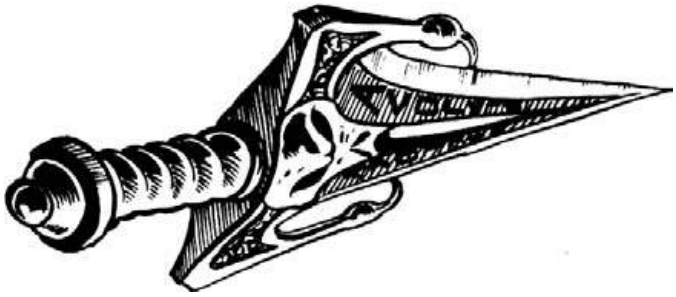
You pick up a small stone and toss it back down the passage. It clatters and echoes in the dark. The trolls look alarmed and two of them rush off to see what has made the noise. The third stays holding the jewel. You rush out, sword in hand, expecting to take him by surprise. However, the troll is a doughty fighter and in an instant he has tossed the jewel aside and now advances, sword in hand. The other trolls can be heard returning. You must try to despatch this one quickly.

TROLLS	*Dexterity*	*Strength*
1st TROLL	8	10
2nd TROLL	7	8
3rd TROLL	5	7

If you win, turn to **151**.

188

The monster lies defeated in the plashing waves. You wipe the sweat from your brow and look around you. There is no way from the beach except by way of a difficult climb up the cliff. You take a moment or two's rest and then, shouldering your pack, you set off to scramble up the steep cliff path. Turn to **12**.



189

You notice similar symbols on both your gift and the throne-like seat on which the old man sits. Perhaps this object has some special significance for Zermahaar.

He takes it carefully in both hands and squints closely at it. He studies each symbol in turn. Suddenly he tosses it at your head.

"It's a fake!" he screams, "Cheap imitation – not precious at all – Guards, kill this deceiver!"

"But I didn't know ... I thought it was . . ." you begin, but your protestations fall on deaf ears.

You have made the wrong choice. You have failed in your quest.

190

Making your way West, you begin to notice a slight difference in the landscape. The hillsides enclosing this valley have a sparse covering of trees. But there appears to have been an outbreak of fire as there are areas of scorched ground and burnt woodland. The smell of burning hangs in the air. A little further along you notice charred bones beside the path. Suspicious now, you draw your sword. Soon another track joins yours from the right.

Will you continue West or go North?

West? Turn to **149**.
North? Turn to **23**.

191

The road climbs steadily upwards but it is not an arduous climb. Soon you see a hooded figure standing by the side of the road to your right. As you approach he looks towards you but you cannot see his face beneath the hood. He shakes his head slowly. "You are a fool. Turn back," he says succinctly.

Will you take his advice and turn back or will you go on?

Turn back? Turn to **145**.
Continue? Turn to **133**.

192

You remove as much of the fetid slime as you can from yourself, wipe and sheath your sword and look about you. The track you were following ends here at the pool. You decide there is nothing for it but to retrace your steps to the cliff top and then try the winding track North, down to the beach. Turn to **14**.

193

You step inside the rock opening. A passage leads upwards, lit at intervals by flaming torches in brackets on the walls.

Your shadow flickers and dances before you as you climb. Soon you come to a steep flight of steps cut into the rock. At the top is a stout, wooden door. You lift the massive latch and the door swings open and reveals a sight you have travelled far to see; the castle of Adonerath, a proud and impregnable fortress in the mountains!

Between you and it, however, is a very narrow causeway stretching some 200–300 metres. It is as narrow as the path on the mountainside but this time there is a sheer drop on both sides. You set out across the causeway, making sure your pack is carefully balanced on your back and taking slow, careful steps. You are making slow but steady progress when a loud clang behind you makes you jump with near disastrous results! You look behind you and see that the wooden door is now firmly shut. There is no going back. Turn to **37**.

194

You keep tight hold of your sword and pack and then, kicking your feet clear of the stirrups, you throw yourself sideways and roll clear of the pounding hooves. Picking yourself up, you dust the dirt from your clothing as best you can and plod on West, following the ever diminishing sound of hoof beats. Turn to **156**.

195

You set off West. To your right is a wooded slope leading to thicker forest beyond. To your left is marshland. After a time you come to a junction. A road runs North/South. Thinking that to go South would be to retrace your steps, you turn and head North through the woodland. Turn to **131**.

196

You hand over five gold pieces and take the knife. Pleased with your purchase, you decide to try it out and pick up a piece of wood to carve. At the first cut the blade chips. You try again. This time the haft breaks clean across. As you watch, the blade turns to rust before your eyes. You turn in anger to where the woodman was standing but he is no longer there. Distant mocking laughter echoes through the trees. You throw down the knife in disgust and turn South again. Turn to **4**.

197

As you stand at the junction you briefly glimpse a movement and, almost immediately, an arrow flashes past and embeds itself in a tree. You leap for cover behind a tree and look around for your attacker, your sword ready in your hand. The ARCHER steps out onto the path and casts aside his bow. He now advances with a drawn sword. You step out to meet him.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
ARCHER	10	10

If you win, turn to **136**.

198

"Humph," says Zermahaar moodily, "You will understand now why I may be a little short-tempered-old age makes one peevish." He shuffles in his chair and then adds, with an eager glint in his eye, "Have you brought me a gift?" You begin to open your pack.

"I only want one, mind you-only the one that will be most precious to me. You must decide which it is," he says.

Which of these have you in your pack? Choose only one from your collection.

Cloak of invisibility	Turn to **178**.
Box that held the cypher	Turn to **39**.
Collar of gold	Turn to **105**.
Brass key	Turn to **3**.
Precious Gem	Turn to **119**.
Silver chalice	Turn to **189**.
Jewelled dagger	Turn to **60**.

199

You walk along the passage for some distance. You hear sounds ahead. Are they voices or merely bats roosting high in the rock ceiling of the passage? Soon the passage turns North. The blue glow is much brighter now and you can see ahead the passage widens into a large cave. Suddenly you dodge into a crevice in the rock. In the cave are three trolls. They are laughing gleefully as they gloat over the treasure they have stolen. The floor of the cave is piled with gold coins, jewels and trinkets. The trolls caper about and run the coins through their fat and hairy fingers. One troll is holding aloft the largest jewel you have ever seen.

"Precious thing! most precious!" says the troll gazing at it in delight, "And all ours now!"

You wonder if this jewel might be a suitable present for Zermahaar and decide to take it.

Do you have the cloak of invisibility?

Yes?	Turn to **135**.
No?	Turn to **187**.

200

You now travel East up the steep hill. It is a long and arduous climb but at last you find yourself at the top. Below you is a breath-taking sight. At your feet the cliff drops sheer away to the left down to the river. It twists and turns amid green meadow land to the East and to the West is the estuary and the open sea. In the distance you can just make out an island. Clouds hang over the island so you cannot see it clearly. Is that where the castle of Adonerath is to be found or is it in the distant mountains to the East?

To the North is a winding track down the cliff to the beach where a small boat is drawn up on the shingle. To the East the track runs along the cliff top. Will you go East or North?

East?	Turn to **93**.
North?	Turn to **14**.

201

It is a broad and pleasant road. On your left is a wood; on your right grassy meadows. You stride on, quite contented in the warm sunshine. On your left you notice a small track. Will you follow this or continue North?

West?	Turn to **132**.
North?	Turn to **44**.

202

You return to Dalgolath triumphant. The queen is waiting for you, you have succeeded in the quest and she greets you warmly.

"My husband will be saved, our kingdom will once again be fair and prosperous and you shall have half the lands of the kingdom for your courage and skill."

You know that you can live a comfortable life for the rest of your days but wonder if you would not prefer the excitement and challenge of another quest!

In Search Of Christmas

Before commencing our Christmas adventure, players are advised to turn back to page 2 and read the instructions on how to play PROTEUS.

By Elizabeth Caldwell

Your Quest Begins...

Christmas morning! You sit bolt upright in bed, your pulse quickening with excitement, banishing sleep with those two magical words. It is still dark outside and you fumble for the switch of the bedside lamp, then leap out of bed to investigate the bulging pillowcase which stands by the fireplace in the corner of the room.

With eager hands you bring out the first of the presents – a book! You had hoped for several and it looks as though your wishes have been granted . . . until you see the title: *1001 ways to cook Antarian Sea Slugs*!? You flip through the pages in disbelief, faintly nauseated by the pictures of some of the recipes. But not discouraged, you cast it aside and dive into the sack once more: another book – *Rock Eating for Beginners.* You distinctly recall asking for *Rocketing for Beginners,* but something must have gone seriously wrong somewhere.

A little more cautiously, you explore the other contents of the pillowcase and discover a small suit like a fancy dress costume, made of red plastic covered in slimy tentacles; your stocking filled with assortment of coloured nuts and bolts;

and at the bottom, a metal cage containing a warty green lump which you assume is some kind of living creature because it is snarling and spitting at you in a most unfriendly manner.

What could have gone wrong? You have got nothing at all that you asked for. You know you have not been a paragon of virtue in the past year, but you are sure that you were reasonably good most of the time and surely do not deserve such treatment. What is Father Christmas playing at?

Then you suddenly realise that there is a sniffing and snivelling sound coming from somewhere up the chimney. Puzzled, you stick your head into the cold fireplace and peer upwards, feeling the cool night air blow softly over your face. There is definitely somebody crying up there, and on a sudden impulse, you decide to investigate. You quickly don your thick dressing gown and fur-lined slippers, and wriggle into the fireplace to begin the ascent.

Fortunately the chimney is wide enough for you to climb up without too much difficulty, but when you reach the top, you are covered from head to toe in soot. So when your black, bedraggled head pops out of the chimney pot, it is uncertain as to who got the biggest shock: you or the red-clothed, white-bearded old man who is sitting sniffing on your roof top.

"Father Christmas!" you gasp in surprise, pulling yourself out of the chimney onto the roof.

"You're not another one of those evil elves, are you?" the tubby old man demands, jumping to his feet. "Because if you are, Rudolf here will toss you so high with his antlers that it'll be next Christmas before you reach the ground!" He jerks his thumb behind him to where a small reindeer with a bright red glowing nose is standing rather unsteadily on the slippery, snow-covered, sloping roof.

"What evil elves?" you ask, trying to brush the soot from you. "What's going on?"

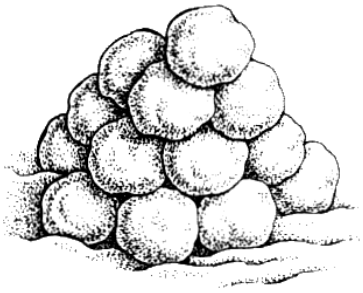
Realising you intend him no harm, Santa explains that King Xodar of the evil elves has stolen his sleigh and is causing havoc and unhappiness by delivering the wrong presents to everybody.

"I've got to do something," bewails, "but I'm too old to go charging off on wild adventures. I need a volunteer, a hero to do the job for me." He looks at you speculatively and then shakes his head. You realise you must present a pretty poor picture in your dressing gown and woolly slippers streaked with soot, but you are determined to show him what you're really made of and declare that you will return his sleigh to him.

"It seems I have little choice," he sighs. "You can take Rudolf to guide you, and my hat – I think that'll come in useful," and he gives you a significant stare as he hands over his red and white wool hat. You don the hat and walk over to Rudolf, who to your surprise, says;

"Get on my back then and let's be off. We haven't got much time, you know."

You climb onto his back and with a graceful bound, the little reindeer leaps off the roof and you flyaway into the cold night air. Turn to **1**.



Now read on....

1

Rudolf tells you that the Ice Palace of King Xodar is somewhere to the North, but he is not sure of the exact location. Will you tell him to fly:

North?	Turn to	**11**.
Northeast?	Turn to	**51**.
Northwest?	Turn to	**72**.

2

The little gnome thanks you profusely and then scurries off towards some nearby wooded hills. Rudolf leaps back up into the sky and you continue North? Turn to **43**.

3

You have hardly had chance to recover from the cloud's attack, when a large snowball whizzes past your head, coating your ear in cold, wet snow. Rudolf swerves slightly and you peer down to see several of the evil elves chuckling gleefully and hurling large snowballs up at you. One strikes you on the leg and you wince with pain – lose two Strength points – these snowballs contain chunks of sharp rock!

"Use the hat," Rudolf tells you. "Hold it out before you, wave your hand over it three times and say 'Merry Christmas' . . . and hope for the best!" Quickly you follow his instructions.

Make a note of the number of this location and turn to **61**. When you have done what you are instructed to in section 61, return here, and turn to **13**.

4

As you overcome the elf he vanishes in a puff of black smoke. Rudolf has disposed of the other elf, and so you continue North through the trees. Turn to **54**.

5

Quite soon you see the Ice Palace of the evil elven king a little way beyond the mountains. Rudolf glides down to land outside the crystal doors of the palace entrance, and you slide off his back to investigate. The double-doors are closed tight, but there is a large keyhole in the right-hand door. Do you have a large, crystal key? If so, turn to **15**. If not, turn to **26**.

6

Your opponents are showered with sweeties . . . very nice but not very frightening! Turn back to the section you made a note of before you used the hat.

7

As you snap off the right-hand icicle, the bars melt into a pool of icy water at your feet and the little fairy flutters her wings and flies over to alight daintily on Rudolf's back.

"Oh thank you!" she cries. "I'll definitely put in a good word for you when I next see Santa!"

You thank her in return, and together the three of you begin to make your way North – turn to **27**.

8

If you have overcome the evil elves with the hat, turn to **18**. Otherwise, turn to **28**.

9

King Xodar sneers nastily. "You have failed! You will be my prisoner here for ever! Heh, Itch, heh!" Your adventure ends here. Turn to **20**.

10

Suddenly a tall, proud reindeer steps out into your path, blocking the way. Several more reindeer appear behind him, and their brown eyes are cold and unfriendly. Rudolf stops and lowers his head, and the tall reindeer in front of you snickers.

"What's wrong?" you hiss in Rudolf's ear.

They make fun of me because of my . . . nose," he whispers sadly.

You glance at the little reindeer's glowing red nose. "But why?" you ask. "What about 'Rudolf with your nose so bright, won't you guide my sleigh tonight' and all the other reindeer loving you because you enabled them to see one foggy Christmas Eve?"

Rudolf looks at you as if you are a little crazy. "What?" he asks, very puzzled.

"Oh, so that hasn't happened yet," you realise. "So we're in trouble."

"That's the first sensible thing you've said!" Rudolf snorts.

"What are you doing here, Red-nose?" the leading reindeer sneers, and the other reindeers laugh.

Anger surges through you and you step protectively in front of Rudolf. "You keep away from him or else!" you declare, waving Santa's hat menacingly at the head reindeer.

"So you're Santa's agent," the reindeer snorts, obviously not impressed. "I wouldn't stick around with *him* too much," he glances at Rudolf. "That red nose might be catching."

A large tear forms in Rudolf's dewy brown eyes, and in sudden rage you wave your hand over the hat and shout "Merry Christmas!"

Make a note of the number of this location and turn to **61**. When you have done what you are instructed to in section 61, return here, and turn to **62**.

11

At first you cling to Rudolf's soft, furry neck as the little reindeer canters gracefully and smoothly Northwards. Gradually you relax your grip, however, and begin to enjoy the sensation of flying. Then a sudden gust of wind causes Rudolf to falter and you almost fall. You wrap your arms tightly around him again, your heart thudding wildly.

"There's rough air up ahead." Rudolf tells you. "It might be better if we turn back."

Will you take his advice and turn back South? Turn to **31**. Or decide that because of the urgency of your quest you must press on North? Turn to **21**.

12

Suddenly you spy a large pointed branch lying half buried in the snow, and in desperation you leap from Rudolf's back and grasping the branch, strike the wolf with it as hard as you can. The snarling animal yowls in pain and whirls around to face you.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
WHITE WOLF	8	8

If you reduce the wolf s Strength by four, turn to **22**.

13

If you have overcome the evil elves with the hat, turn to **33**. If not, turn to **23**.

14

You wind your way through the trees down a tiny, twisting pathway. Rudolf s glowing red nose lights your way so you avoid stumbling over tree roots and falling into ditches. You give your friend an affectionate pat and his eyes smile back at you.

Then suddenly out of the trees float several tiny, glowing lights that weave and dance in front of you, dart away and then return as if enticing you to follow them. They are will-o'-the-wisps and their power of enchantment is very strong. Throw two dice and add the numbers together. This is the strength of the will-o'-the-wisps' magic. Throw two more dice and add together those numbers. This is your strength of will to overcome their enchantment. If your strength of will is greater than the will-o'-the-wisps' magic, you may continue on your way North – turn to **54**. If, however, the will-o'-the-wisps' magic is greater, turn to **24**.

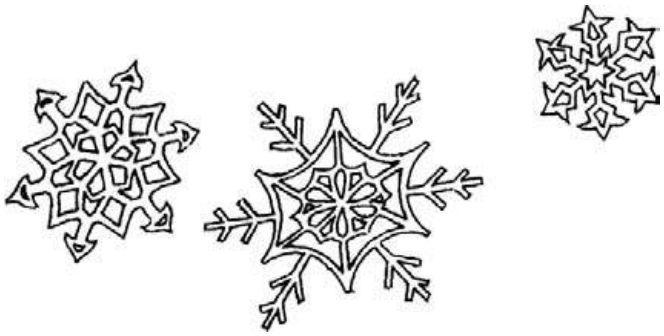
15

You take the key, which the harpy gave you, from your pocket and insert it into the keyhole. It fits perfectly, and you turn it and open the doors. Turn to **64**.

16

Your opponents are showered with Christmas decorations – coloured streamers, tinsel, Christmas tree ornaments and so forth. Very festive, but hardly an effective weapon!

Turn back to the section you made a note of before you used the hat.



17

You enter a milky white corridor which leads West for a short distance and then turns to the North, ending abruptly at a large, marble door which is slightly ajar. You peep through into a small room, in the centre of which is a large, round table. The table is laden with food, and your mouth begins to water at the sight of Christmas pudding and mince pies, amongst other things, and the pungent smell of hot, spicy punch wafts in your direction.

You enter the room and walk over to the table with the intention of sampling the punch, but as you help yourself to a crystal goblet, the punch begins to bubble frantically. You peer into the large, silver punch bowl to see that the dark liquid is splashing around as if it has a mind of its own, and suddenly it surges up out of the bowl in the shape of a huge boxing glove and punches you right on the nose! Lose three Strength points and turn to **48**.

18

You notice one of the elves has a suitable gong-hammer hanging from his waist. Turn to **66**.

19

"Rudolf, will you lead the way?" you ask, and at his eager nod, you harness him at the front of the other reindeer, who do not complain as they are so glad to see a familiar face (or nose). Then you climb onto the sleigh and at your command, the reindeer leap up into the night sky. Turn to **75**.

20

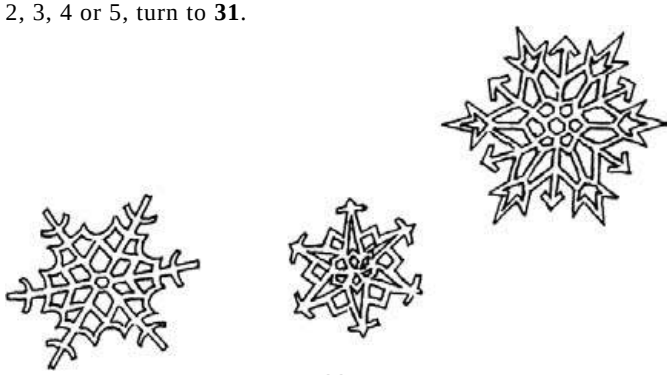
Well . . . actually, it doesn't end here really because since it's Christmas and the season of goodwill towards all Proteus readers, we'll let you continue just this once . . .

Then suddenly evil king Xodar is struck by a mysterious bolt of blue lightning (which you are sure bears an uncanny resemblance to a bottle of typing correction fluid), and is transformed into a little black Christmas tree with a twinkling star on top! Turn to **29**.

21

Rudolf does not argue, but you can see his body tense beneath you as he continues North. A strong wind is getting up, trying to tug you from his back and causing the little reindeer to swerve from side to side. Then ahead of you, you suddenly see the cause of the turbulence – a whirlwind! The twisting cone is racing towards you, sucking up trees, houses and other debris from the ground.

"We'll be sucked into it!" Rudolf cries, and tries to turn back. Throw one dice. If you get a 1 or 6, turn to **41**. If you get 2, 3, 4 or 5, turn to **31**.



22

After you have given it a good beating with the branch, the white wolf turns and flees with its tail between its legs. Turn to **2**.

23

Throw one dice to discover the number of snowballs that hit you. Roll the dice again, once for each of these snowballs and if you get an even number, take two points off your Strength,

and if an odd number, take one point of your Strength. Turn to **33**.

24

Drawn by a power you cannot resist, you follow the dancing lights into the forest until you come to an old, hollow tree with a dark doorway cut into its trunk. Abruptly, the will-o'-the-wisps vanish and you feel as if a fog has been lifted from your mind. Then there is an eerie shrieking and from out of the hollow tree comes an incredibly ugly creature, half-bird, half-female -a harpy!

"What have we here?' the harpy shrieks when it spies you. "Trespassers, by the looks of things. All trespassers will have their gizzards torn out unless you can answer me one simple question." She glares at you with yellow eyes, then cocks her head on one side and smiles a sickly, toothless grin. "Tell me how beautiful I am."

Will you tell her that her beauty is like that of a delicate pink rose in the dawn light of a Summer's morning? Turn to **63**.

Tell her that her beauty is like that of a warty toad squatting in a stagnant swamp? Turn to **32**.

Use Santa's hat? Turn to **34**.

25

A flurry of snowflakes bursts from the hat and freezes any opponents or whatever it is you are aiming at.

Turn back to the section you made a note of before you used the hat.

26

You have no alternative but to try to force the doors open, so you begin pounding at them with your shoulders and Rudolf butts them with his antlers. Eventually, the doors fly apart, showering you in crystal splinters. You have done four points of damage to your Strength, and Rudolf's antlers are rather dented, but otherwise you are intact and you walk in through the doorway. Turn to **64**.

27

You return North, passing the corridor on your left which you came along earlier. The passage continues North for quite some distance and then turns West, opening out into a large room. Turn to **73**.

29

You are quickly overcome by the evil elves as there are so many of them, and after tying you up and taking the icicle sword, one of the elves strikes the gong with a large, padded hammer. You are nearly deafened by the sound, and the whole room shudders. Then a large crack appears in the North wall behind the gong . . . then another and another, and suddenly the wall bursts into tiny glass fragments, leaving a perfect arched doorway. The evil elves push you and Rudolf through and then scurry away. Turn to **49**.

29

You notice the outline of another door in the North wall behind the throne, and after a quick search, discover the hidden mechanism that opens it. You enter a long corridor and after quite some distance, emerge at last outside the palace . . . and standing nearby is Santa's sleigh with twelve miserable reindeer chained to it! Turn to **19**.

30

You unwrap the parcel to discover' a cardboard box containing a large hammer, the head of which has a soft leather cloth bound around it. You stick the hammer in your dressing-gown pocket and continue along the corridor. Turn to **40**.

31

You turn back South and fly a safe distance away from the turbulence. Will you now go:

Northeast?	Turn to	**51**.
Northwest?	Turn to	**72**.

32

As you begin to describe in graphic detail the wartiness of the toad and the stagnancy of the swamp, the harpy virtually glows with pleasure.

"Such pretty words." she sighs. "Take this with you, Silver-tongue. You may find it useful." She throws over a large, crystal key. "But don't come back here again," she continues. "You're both so ugly I can hardly stand the sight of you!" Then she shuffles back into her tree and you quickly continue North. Turn to **54**.

33

You leave the evil elves behind and continue on your way North. Turn to **43**.

34

As you bring forth the hat, the harpy shrieks horrifically and waves her clawed hands in a curious gesture. At once you are paralysed from head to toe, and her yellow eyes bore into your soul.

"Tell me now." she squawks. "How beautiful am I?"

Will you tell her that her beauty is like that of the rose? Turn to **63**. Or the toad? Turn to **32**.

35

Your opponents are turned into toads! Turn back to the section you made a note of before you used the hat.

36

A little way South of the junction, the corridor ends at a small room, the only entrance of which is blocked by crystal bars. Imprisoned in the room is a tiny female figure in a sparkling pink dress, with two gossamer-thin wings of iridescent colours. Her face is buried in her hands and her slender body shudders with heart-wrenching sobs.

You call to her quietly and she leaps to her feet, golden hair flying around her pretty tear-stained face. Then her alarm is replaced by relief and recognition as she runs towards the bars.

"Rudolf'. Oh Rudolf!" she cries.

"This is the Christmas tree fairy," Rudolf tells you.

"I've been imprisoned here by the evil Elfking Xodar," she says. "The only way I can be freed is if someone solves the puzzle of the icicles. Oh, please will you try it?"

You ask her what you have to do and she says that hanging above the crystal bars are three icicles and when the correct one is broken, the bars will break also. She does not know, however, which one of the three icicles it is – or what will happen if you break the wrong one.

Will you break:

The right-hand icicle?	Turn to	**7**.
The centre icicle?	Turn to	**56**.
The left-hand icicle?	Turn to	**70**.

37

You dive to one side as a dagger-sharp icicle drops from the ceiling and pierces deep into your right shoulder. Lose four Strength points and two Dexterity points. You pull the icicle free and fling it from you, grimacing against the pain.

Will you now, if you have not already done so, break:

The right-hand icicle?	Turn to	**7**.
The centre icicle?	Turn to	**56**.
The left-hand icicle?	Turn to	**70**.

38

As you stand there wondering what you can use to strike the gong with, a troop of evil elven soldiers bursts in through the door in the East wall and you are quickly surrounded. In desperation, you hold forth Santa's hat and perform the ritual to work its magic. Make a note of the number of this location and turn to 61. When you have done what you are instructed to in section 61, return here and turn to **8**.

PROTEUS

39

If you overcame King Xodar with the hat, turn to **29**. Otherwise, turn to **9**.

40

You continue East till you arrive at a T-junction. Just as you are wondering whether to go North or South, you hear sobbing from down the Southern corridor and so decide to investigate. Turn to **36**.

41

Rudolf tries his best to fly away, but the force of the whirlwind is too strong and you are both sucked into its nightmare depths. Your adventure ends here.

42

If you overcame the wolf with the hat, turn to **2**. If you did not, turn to **12**.

43

You begin to make out a forest ahead of you and Rudolf says he has to land for a rest and try to find something to eat in the forest. He glides down to the outskirts of the forest, and the two of you make your way North into the trees. Turn to **10**.

44

If you have overcome the evil elf with the hat, turn to **4**. If not, you must fight him as best you can. Since you are at a disadvantage because you have no weapon, you must take two off your Dexterity for this battle, and because you are fighting with your bare hands, you only do ONE point of damage to the elf s Strength instead of two when you strike him.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
EVIL ELF	7	6

If you win, turn to **4**.

45

After the battle, you rest for a while until the storm has passed (restore two Strength points), and then venture outside once more. Rudolf is ready to fly again, so you clamber onto his back and be bounds up into the star-filled sky. Turn to **5**.

46

Gold coins shower forth from the hat. If your opponents are humanoid they will be distracted by this and try to pick up the coins, but as soon as they touch them, they are turned into gold statues. If your opponents are animals, the appearance of the coins will have no effect on them.

Turn back to the section you made a note of before you used the hat.

47

You enter a milky white corridor heading East, and have not gone far along it when you come across an oblong parcel in brightly coloured Christmas wrapping paper upon the floor. Will you open the parcel? Turn to **30**. Or continue East? Turn to **40**.

48

You stagger back from the table, covered in sticky liquid, your eyes watering from the painful punch. Then gradually you become aware of deep, mocking laughter, and peering once more at the table, you are astonished to see that two, beady, current-like eyes and a large, smirking mouth have appeared in the Christmas pudding!

"Try to eat us, would you?" the pudding taunts in a rich, fruity voice. "Go get 'em, men!" At the pudding's command, all the mince pies leap from the table and begin snapping at your legs with tiny, pointed teeth which peep out from under their sugar-coated lids.

Trying to convince yourself that this is not really happening, you decide to make a hasty exit through a door in the North wall, and with the mince pies hot on your heels, you go through into a pale, North-heading corridor. Turn to **57**.

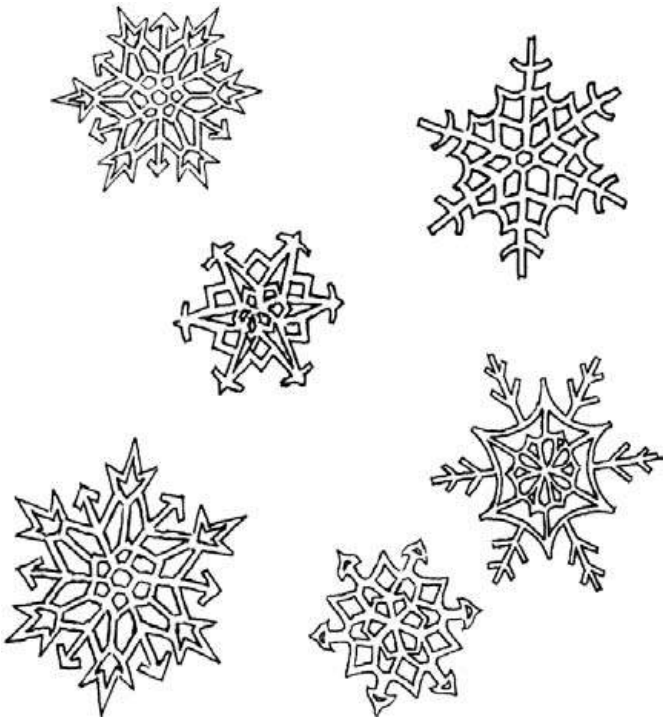
49

As you walk through, you hear a sound like tinkling glass behind you, and glancing round, you see that the crystal wall has reformed and the doorway has vanished.

You have entered an octagonal room of opaque glass, and you are surrounded by ghostly reflections of yourself within the milky walls. Sitting on a crystal throne before you is the evil elf king Xodar! He is dressed in a black tunic and cloak and stands out starkly against the whiteness of the room. Have you been tied up by the evil elves? If so, turn to **67**. If not, turn to **58**.

50

In desperation, you work the magic of Santa's hat. Make a note of the number of this location and turn to **61**. When you have done what you are instructed to in section 61, return here, and turn to **39**.



51

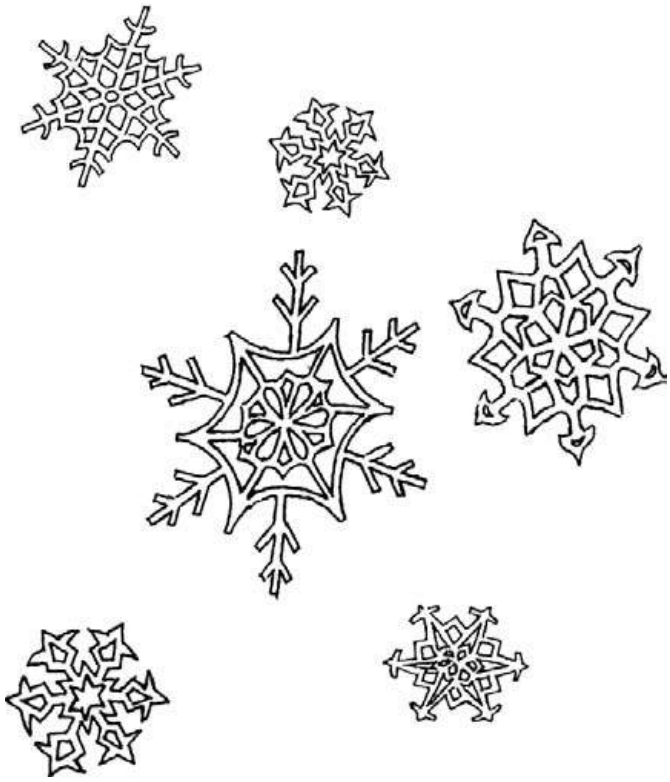
Clinging tightly to Rudolf's back, you head Northeast and soon it begins to snow. The snowflakes tumble softly all around you, but strangely enough, do not seem to actually land on you. You mention this to Rudolf and he turns to look at you and winks.

"Trade secret. One of the advantages of being one of Santa's reindeers!"

Then you notice that some of the snowflakes are coloured – red, blue, green and purple.

"That's odd," Rudolf says. "I've never seen snow like that before."

One of the large, coloured flakes lands on your hand and you cry out in pain as it burns into your flesh with a stabbing pain. Rudolf says nothing but his large, brown eyes are filled with alarm and he quickens his pace. Throw one dice. That is the number of coloured snowflakes which hit you before you fly clear of the storm, and you must take that. number off your Strength. Turn to **59**.



52

It seems almost impossible, but you make it safely past the clouds and continue on a direct Northerly course. Turn to **3**.

53

"A feeble attempt," the reindeer sneers. "You can't continue this way. This path is for *real* reindeer and people who can work *real* magic." He lowers his antlers threateningly. "Into the forest with you!" You glance nervously into the dark depths of the fir trees on either side, as the reindeer shuffle forwards, antlers lowered.

"Come on, friend," Rudolf says, a little sadly. "We will find our way."

Will you go:

East?	Turn to **71**.
West?	Turn to **14**.

54

Eventually you emerge from the forest onto the snow-covered slopes of a huge mountain range. A short distance ahead, you can make out a narrow pass between the towering cliffs, and as Rudolf seems unwilling to fly, you begin to walk towards it. Your little friend has been very subdued since your encounter with the other reindeer, and you wish there was something you could do to cheer him up.

It has started snowing again and the wind swirls the snowflakes around you in icy gusts and flurries. You trudge North up the pass, your dressing gown pulled tightly around you, and your slippers soaked with wet snow. Rudolf must have sensed your sinking spirits, for he suddenly nuzzles close to you.

"Don't despair." he says. "The Ice Palace of King Xodar is at the end of the pass just beyond the mountains. If the snow storm dies down we can fly again for a bit."

The storm does not die down, however, and if anything gets worse. After you have battled on for quite some distance, Rudolf points out a large cave down a small track to the West, and you gratefully make your way towards it. Turn to **69**.

55

A cloud of sparkling golden dust falls over your opponents. This is Santa's Happy Dust and turns all foes into friends.

Turn back to the section you made a note of before you used the hat.

56

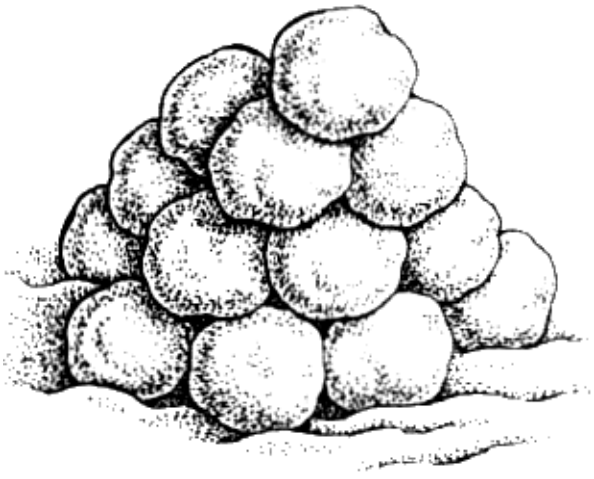
As you snap off the centre icicle, there is a crisp, cracking sound from above you, and suddenly recognising the sound, you dive to one side. Throw two dice. If the numbers on both dice add up to the same or less than your Dexterity, turn to **65**. If they add up to more than your Dexterity, turn to **37**.

57

The corridor leads you North for just a short distance and then turns East, opening out into a large room. Turn to **73**.

58

Do you have the icicle sword? If so, turn to **74**. If not, turn to **50**.



59

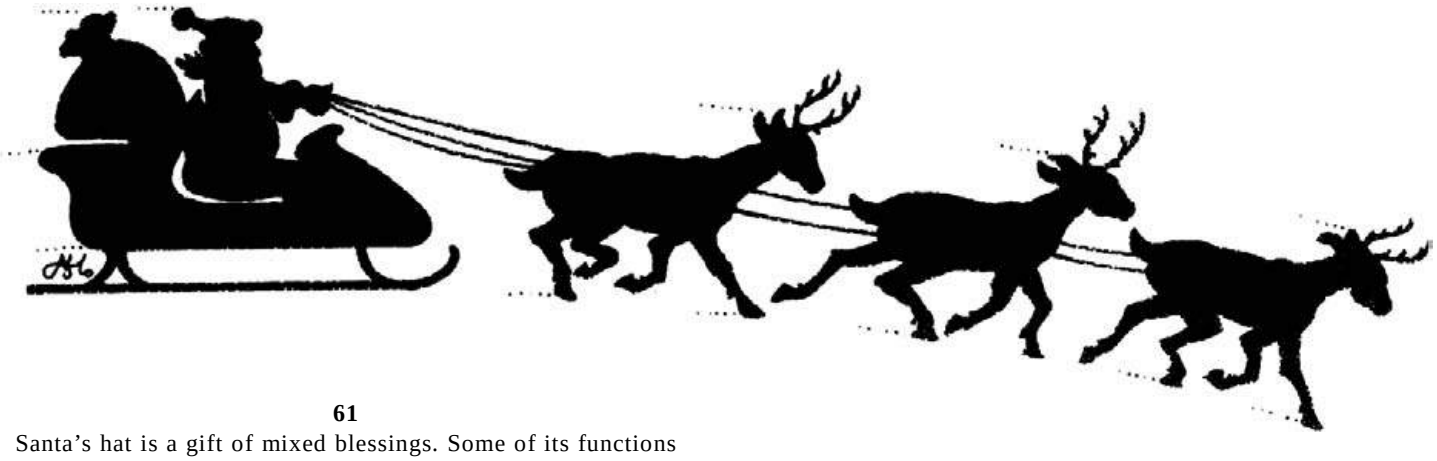
It is with great relief that you fly clear of the unnatural snow cloud, and Rudolf turns onto a straight North-heading course. You have not gone far, however, when you hear a cry for help from the snow-covered ground below, accompanied by the snarling of some large animal. You nod in answer to Rudolf's questioning look and glide down to investigate.

A brightly dressed gnome is being menaced by a huge, white wolf. The little gnome is running frantically in circles trying to escape, while the wolf closes in, his red fanged mouth drooling hungrily.

"Use the hat!" Rudolf cries. "Hold it out before you, wave your hand over it three times and say 'Merry Christmas' . . . and hope for the best!" Quickly you follow the reindeer's instructions. Make a note of the number of this location and turn to **61**. When you have done what you are instructed to in section 61, return here, and turn to **42**.

60

You do not manage to dodge the thunder and lightning successfully and are struck by the full fury of the clouds. Lose six Strength points. If you are still alive, you continue out of the clouds on a direct Northerly course. Turn to **3**.



61

Santa's hat is a gift of mixed blessings. Some of its functions you will find are more helpful than others.

Roll one dice:

If you throw a 1	Turn to	**25**.
If you throw a 2	Turn to	**6**.
If you throw a 3	Turn to	**35**.
If you throw a 4	Turn to	**46**.
If you throw a 5	Turn to	**55**.
If you throw a 6	Turn to	**16**.

62

If you overcome the reindeer with the hat, turn to **68**. Otherwise, turn to **53**.

63

"What?!" the harpy shrieks so loudly your ears ring painfully. All harpies must have splitting headaches with voices like that, you decide ... it must be what makes them so bad-tempered. "Foul creature, daring to compare *me* with such an ugly little plant! I should rip your gizzard out for that, but because I'm in such a good mood today, I'll let you go – just this once, mind! If you come back here again I'll eat you alive!"

Wasting no time in case she changes her mind, you hurry off North. Turn to **54**.

64

You enter a large hall of crystal ice. Tall frosted pink columns tower up on either side of you, to a vaulted ceiling covered in coloured icicles. You see yourselves reflected in walls of ice all around, so it seems as though an army of reindeers and dressing-gowned figures has just entered the hall.

The hall is empty of furniture or people, and in the East and West walls are two arched doorways. Will you leave through:

The East doorway?	Turn to	**47**.
The West doorway?	Turn to	**17**.

65

You dive to one side as a dagger-sharp icicle drops from the ceiling and smashes into splinter-like shards on the hard floor.

Will you now, if you have not already done so, break off:

The right-hand icicle?	Turn to	**7**.
The centre icicle?	Turn to	**56**.
The left-hand icicle?	Turn to	**70**.

66

Taking out the hammer, you strike the gong a mighty blow. You are nearly deafened at the sound it makes and the whole room shudders. Then a large crack appears in the North wall behind the gong... then another and another, and suddenly the wall bursts into tiny glass fragments, leaving a perfect arched doorway. Your curiosity is aroused and you walk through. Turn to **49**.

67

King Xodar gets to his feet and swaggers towards you, with the sneer of a life-long bully on his ugly face.

"Try to keep him talking," Rudolf hisses, and begins to nibble at the ropes which tie your hands behind your back. Keeping him talking does not prove to be much of a problem, as Xodar begins to describe at great length a vast number of terrible tortures which he is going to put you through. He is so wrapped up in his horrific visions, he does not notice Rudolf's activities until the ropes suddenly snap and you are free! Turn to **50**.

66

You follow the path through the forest North for a short distance, but then it splits into two. You decide not to risk leaving the cleared pathway, so will you head:

East?	Turn to **71**.
West?	Turn to **14**.

69

As you enter the dark shelter of the cave, you sink to the rocky floor, exhausted and so relieved to be out of the wind and icy snow. Rudolf is about to settle down beside you, when there is a low rumbling roar from the shadows at the back of the cave, and out stomps a huge, man-like beast covered in white fur, with red eyes and long claws and fangs.

"The abominable snowman!" you cry, leaping to your feet in horror.

"According to legend, he guards the icicle sword," Rudolf tells you. ',''It must be here in the cave somewhere. If you can find it, it is a mighty weapon and a great prize."

In the rosy light of Rudolf's nose, you quickly scan the cave and spy the sword hanging on the wall behind the abominable snowman.

"You distract him and I'll try to get round him," you tell the little reindeer. Rudolf nods and lowers his antlers, while you dart to one side. The plan works well, and you grasp the cold hilt of the icicle sword and leap forwards to attack the monster which is trying to tear Rudolf apart.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN	7	16

If you win, turn to **45**.

70

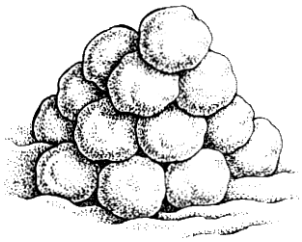
As you snap off the left-hand icicle there is a crisp, cracking sound from above you, and suddenly recognising the sound, you dive to one side. Throw two dice. If the numbers on both dice add up to the same or less than your Dexterity, turn to **65**. If they add up to more than your Dexterity, turn to **37**.

71

You wind your way through the trees down a narrow, overgrown track. Rudolf's nose glows brightly, lighting your way so you avoid stumbling over tree roots and falling into ditches. You give your friend an affectionate pat and his eyes smile back at you.

Suddenly there is an unearthly shriek, and out of the undergrowth leap two of the evil elves. Their scratched, dirty faces are surrounded by tangled black hair, and their clothes hang in tattered rags. They hold gleaming swords in their claw-like hands, and advance towards you with unpleasant, twisted smiles.

"You take the one on the left," Rudolf hisses and lowers his antlers, pawing the ground with his sharp, hard hooves. Hoping for the best, you work the magic that activates the hat. Make a note of the number of this location and turn to section **61**. When you have done what you are instructed to in section 61, return here, and turn to **44**.



72

Clinging tightly to Rudolf's back, you head Northwest into a dark sky, filled with angry clouds**.** One of the angry clouds emits a low, rumbling roar, and you are amazed to see vague humanoid features form within the thundery depths.

"Who dares to approach?" the cloud booms with a crash of thunder and flicker of lightning.

"It is I, Rudolf," your reindeer companion replies, "on an urgent mission for Santa."

"Gggrrmmmph!" the cloud rumbles. "We're no friends of Santa anymore. Those elves of his ploughed his sleigh right through us, yelling all kinds of unmentionable abuse. Believe me, being trampled on by a herd of reindeer is no fun!"

74

As you draw the magical icicle sword, the evil elf king pales and his triumphant sneer is replaced by a cowardly snivel.

"Not . . . the icicle sword," he begs. "Anything but that! One touch of it will drain my soul and freeze it forever in icy torment!"

You demand that he tells you where Santa's sleigh is, and glancing nervously at the sword, he says he will return it to you right away. He leads you through a hidden doorway in the North wall and down a long corridor, to emerge at length outside the palace. Standing nearby is the sleigh with twelve miserable reindeer chained to it. Turn to **19**.

"They're evil elves! They've stolen Santa's sleigh," Rudolf tries to explain, but the clouds scurry forward, lashing the ground with whip-like lightning.

"Hold tight," Rudolf whispers. "This may get a bit rough." Then he dives forward in leaps and bounds, this way and that, dodging the lightning and thunderbolts. Roll one dice and add six to that number. This is Rudolf's Dexterity. Roll the dice again and add six to that number. This is the cloud's Dexterity. If Rudolf's Dexterity is greater than that of the cloud's, turn to **52**. If, however, the cloud's Dexterity is greater, turn to **60**.

73

The room is empty except for a huge gong suspended from the ceiling near the North wall. Do you have a hammer with which to strike the gong? If so, turn to **66**. If not, turn to **38**.

75

Rudolf guides the sleigh Southwards, racing across the star-filled sky to where Santa is waiting on your rooftop. He is overjoyed to see you, and showers you with presents and congratulations. Then you wriggle back down the chimney to your room and, after a quick wash, get into bed, wondering whether you will believe it all really happened when you wake up later in the morning.

As you begin to drift into sleep, you hear a muffled "Merry Christmas" from up the chimney, and Santa's hat drops into the cold fireplace, then wafts across the room to land at the foot of your bed. You smile. It's going to be a wonderful Christmas!

The Fortress of Kruglach by Elizabeth C. Caldwell

(Reprinted rfom *Proteus* No. 6)

THIS is not a story about our modern world, but one of long ago, when strange creatures roamed the land, and Sorcerers possessed great power. As an adventurer, your Strength, Courage and Agility have brought you safely through many daunting quests in the past. And when you enter the fortress of Kruglach, you will need all these qualities. Below, you will discover – with a little luck – how swift, strong, and charmed you are.

You will need two dice, a pencil, and several sheets of paper. Use the pencil and paper to draw a map of your progress through the fortress. You may not succeed at the first attempt, and the map will be useful in future attempts.

There is a Quest Sheet opposite, for you to write down your scores for Dexterity, Strength and Fate/ Fortune, and to keep a note of your rations, secrets or Spells learnt, and items discovered. You may prefer, before you begin your adventure, to use the printed Quest Sheet simply as a model for the things you will need to take note of, or keep a record of, during your Quest. If you do this, you will obviously need another piece of paper to copy down the headings on the Quest Sheet.

Dexterity, Strength, and Fate/Fortune

Roll one dice. Add 6 to this number, and make a note of it on your Quest Sheet. This is your *Dexterity* score, and indicates your skill and mastery of swordsmanship.

Roll two dice. Add 12 to this number, and make a note of it on your Quest Sheet. This is your *Strength* score, and is a measure of your fitness and stamina.

Roll one dice. Add 6 to this number, and write it on your Quest Sheet. This is your *Fate/Fortune* score. During the game, you will sometimes be asked to test whether you have been fortunate, or whether Fate has dealt you a cruel blow. To do this, throw two dice, where instructed in the text. If the numbers on the dice add up to more than your Fate/Fortune score, Fate has been cruel to you. If however, the numbers add up to the same as, or less than your Fate/Fortune score, you have been fortunate. In each case, you will be told which section to turn to.

Your Strength and Dexterity ratings will probably change during the course of your adventure. You may lose Strength points in battle, for example, and then restore them by eating a meal. Your characteristics may also be affected by magical items, and, in such situations, you will be told how many points to add onto or deduct from your current ratings.

You must remember, however, that your Strength and Dexterity scores must never exceed their *Initial* values, as determined by the dice rolls at the start of any one adventure.

Rules for fighting

As you explore the fortress, you will encounter creatures which you may choose to engage in combat, or be forced to fight with for your life. Each creature will have its own Dexterity and Strength scores, given in the text. Make a note of these.

To resolve a battle:

1. Roll two dice, and add the creature's current Dexterity score. This is its *Fighting Power.*

2. Roll two dice, and add your own current Dexterity score. This is your *Fighting Power.*

3. If your *Fighting Power is* greater than the creature's, you have scored a blow and wounded it. Subtract two Strength points from its Strength score at that moment (unless told otherwise in the text). If the creature's *Fighting Power is* greater than yours in this round, it has wounded you. Subtract two points from your current Strength score. If both scores are the same, you have parried each other's blows, and neither of you loses any points.

The next round in the battle is done in just the same way. You repeat steps 1, 2, and 3 above. When either your or the creature's Strength score is reduced to zero, the battle is over. A zero Strength score means death.

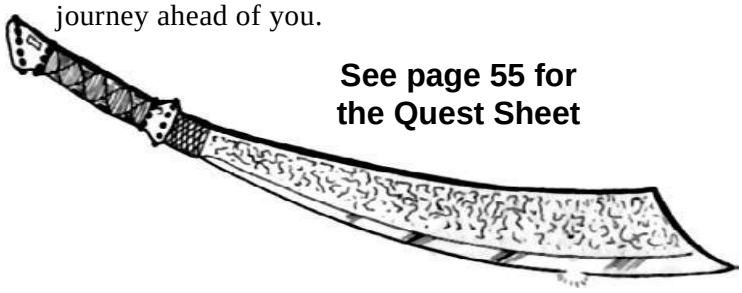
Losing and gaining points

In some sections, you will be awarded extra points. (For example, you may read "Gain three Strength points"). You add these to your current Strength score: but remember, these scores may never exceed their *Initial* values. When you lose points (for example, "Lose one Dexterity point and two Strength points"), you simply deduct these from your current scores.

Replenishing your Strength

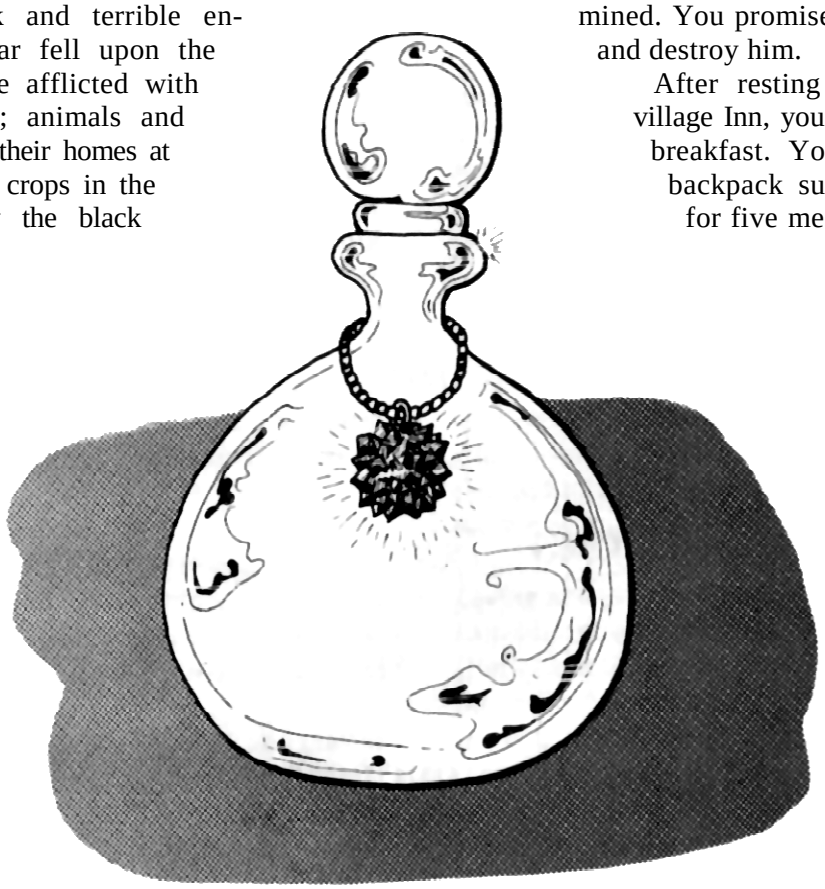
You will shortly read about the beginning of your Quest, in which you will learn of the terrorised lives of the people of Arn Gate. Before leaving, you make up sufficient provisions for *five* meals. Make a note of this. Eating a meal restores five Strength points. When you stop for a meal – which you may do at any time, except during a battle – add five points to your current Strength score, and deduct one from the number of meals remaining to you. But remember to use your rations wisely: you have a long and hard journey ahead of you.

See page 55 for the Quest Sheet



Your Quest Begins...

In the elder days, beyond the ancient forest of Regnad, the evil Sorcerer Kruglach built for himself a mighty fortress of stone. He retreated into this, to experiment with dark and terrible enchantments, and a fear fell upon the land. The people were afflicted with plague and pestilence; animals and children vanished from their homes at dead of night; and the crops in the fields were ruined by the black fungus that spread in the polluted air from Kruglach's towers.



After many dark years, Kruglach's evil influence abruptly ceased, and the people joyfully assumed him dead. But now, centuries later, in the village of Arn Gate on the edge of the forest, the people are dying from an unknown sickness, their crops are wilting, and their children disappearing. The surrounding villages, in fear, have banded together and offered a reward to anyone who would venture beyond the forest to seek the fortress of Kruglach and put an end to his evil.

Attracted by the reward, but also curious, you have journeyed to Arn Gate. The broadsheet, nailed to a tree, gave you little information, other than that the villagers were prepared to pay anyone who could free them. The people of Arn Gate have been able to tell you little, other than the ancient tales of Kruglach's evil, and the location of his fortress.

The reward for putting an end to Kruglach's reign – one hundred and fifty gold pieces – is hardly a fortune, but you live as much for the thrill of a challenge as financial reward. And the helpless looks in the villagers' eyes simply make you more determined. You promise to seek out Kruglach, and destroy him.

After resting for the night in the village Inn, you rise, exercise, and take breakfast. You stow away in your backpack sufficient food packages for five meals, and set off in good spirits, leaving with a brief wave to the assembled villagers.

Arn Gate is now far behind you, and for a day and part of the night you have been making your way across the meadows and through the forest of Regnad. Despite the obvious fears of the villagers, you have met no danger so far, and have eaten well from the roots, leaves and berries of magical life-enhancing plants.

But as you press deeper into the woods, making your way by the light of a rising moon, the twisting branches and tangled undergrowth begin to close in around you. You are overcome by an uneasy feeling of oppression, as if the forest is somehow aware of you, and you are not welcome. You stop for a moment and grip the handle of your sword, trying to banish the irrational fears that assault your senses. But there is no rustling of woodland animals in the undergrowth, and no owl hoots in the dark canopy of leaves above you. No gentle breeze stirs the unnatural stillness of the Regnad woods.

As you venture cautiously onwards, you begin to make out the dark shape of a turret beyond the trees – the fortress! A flicker of doubt crosses your mind. It would be easy to turn back now. You have been on many quests, and faced terrible danger, but never before has your heart fluttered as it does now. You remind yourself of your promise to the villagers: promises are not to be broken.

As fear and courage struggle within you, you glimpse a flicker of light in the trees not far ahead. Curiosity soon overcomes your doubts, and, drawing your sword, you stealthily make your way through the bracken and branches towards the source of the light.

At the edge of a small, roughly circular clearing, you crouch, and peer through the leaves. A heavy mist swirls round the clearing, but in the centre you can see a small wooden hut; and you can also now see the source of the light – flames dance eerily and silently from a small fire made from kindling and twigs. A chill passes through you as you realise that what you had taken to be a large stone, beside the fire, is in fact a human skull.

As you watch and wait, the air becomes steadily more oppressive. Your limbs are heavy and you have difficulty breathing. A sudden flash of lightning, followed almost immediately by an ear-splitting crack of thunder, turns the scene into bright daylight for an instant. Then all is deathly still again.

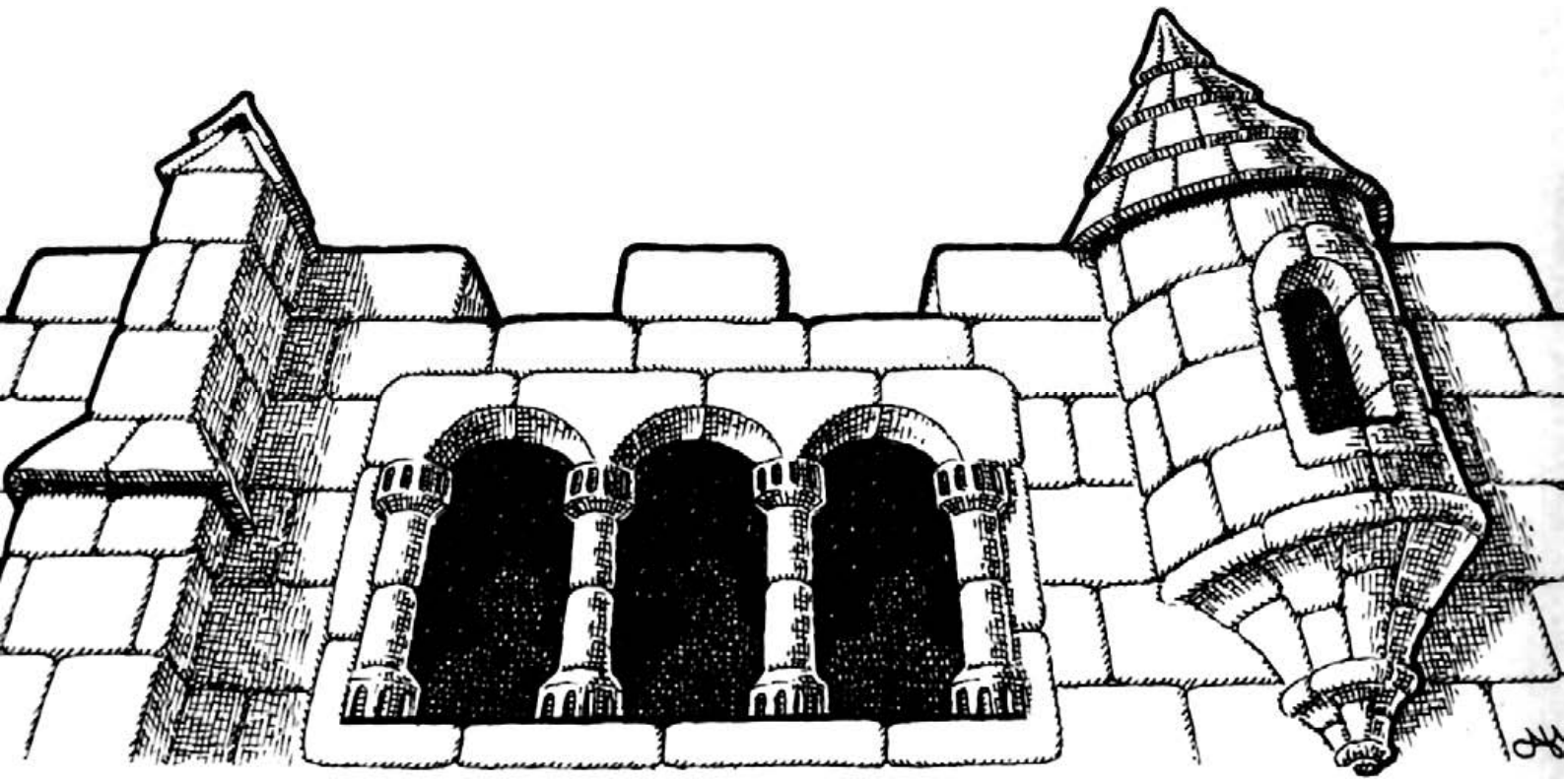
A second thunderclap, even more violent than before, knocks you to the ground. You tumble into the clearing, arms and legs flailing, and finally land in an undignified heap a few feet from the fire. The air is ice-cold, and you start to shiver uncontrollably; the fire, far from providing heat, seems to be drawing to itself what little warmth there was in the night air.

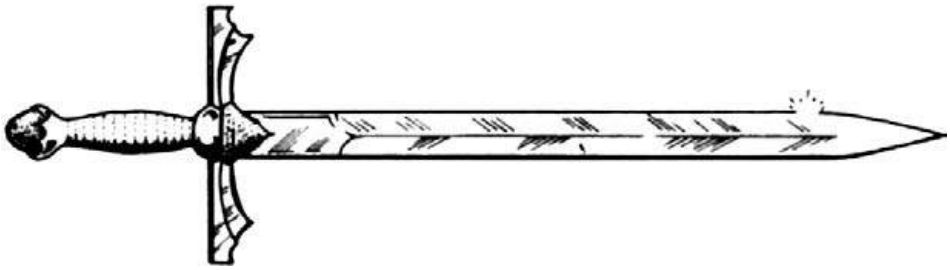
But now there is a new horror to contend with – squatting beyond the fire is a creature such as you have never encountered before. Its massive, rippling body is blood-red, and a ridge of spines runs down its back. The head grows straight out of its huge shoulders; where a neck might have been there are crumpled folds of flesh. Sharp, pointed ears, a broad flat nose, bulbous eyes and a gaping, fanged mouth make up the face.

It speaks, and its voice is a gurgling, rasping boom: “I am not of your dimensions or time,” you hear, “but I was known as Raaka Dihar, many centuries ago.”

You wait, saying nothing, and after a pause, Raaka Dihar continues: “It was I, all those centuries past, who imprisoned the soul of Kruglach in an enchanted crystal bottle, to put an end to his reign of chaos.

“Now,” booms Raaka Dihar in sudden fury,





"some ignorant fool has discovered the enchanted bottle, and released Kruglach's soul, so that his evil has begun anew. And since a mortal released the soul, so a mortal must recapture it. You believe yourself equal to this task?"
You can only nod in bewilderment.

"Very well then," grates Raaka Dihar. "When you enter the fortress and discover Kruglach, you will have to perform the Spell of Soul Capture. And I warn you, his lair within the fortress is well-guarded. However, should you succeed in fighting your way through to face him, you will need to possess certain items of power to enable you to cast the Spell. Three hairs from a Werewolf's tail, two teeth from a Cyclops, and the Eye of a Sorcerer are necessary, as is the receptacle into which his soul is to be imprisoned. Then say the words, 'Kruglach nothrog gethod', and the Spell will be cast.

"But beware – this Spell is one of the most powerful. You must also find the Horn of a Unicorn and a feather from the wing of a flying horse. With these protective talismans either side of you, it is safe to cast the Spell. Without them, you may find that it is your own soul that is imprisoned. Now go!"

You awake as from a trance, and slowly get to your feet. Raaka Dihar does not stir, and you walk round him, past the small but and into the woods beyond. Soon, Kruglach's fortress is in sight, due North, and, bearing in mind all that Raaka Dihar has told you, you make your way towards it.

Now read on....

1

As you approach the fortress, a foul smell of stagnant water assaults your nostrils, and you see that the black walls are surrounded by a moat. The water is covered with disgusting scum which occasionally ripples and bubbles, as though some huge creature were moving below. A rotting drawbridge crosses the moat, and leads to a large wooden door. Will you:

Dash across the drawbridge?	Turn to	**21**
Cross slowly, but with great care?	Turn to	**71**
Swim across, beneath the drawbridge?	Turn to	**54**

2

You dispose of the Goblin with one swift stroke of your sword and search his body, but find nothing of interest. You freeze as you hear more voices – it sounds as though a considerable number of additional GOBLIN GUARDS is approaching, and they are muttering about the entrance being left open.

There is a grating noise from below, and, realising the danger, you dash down the spiral staircase three steps at a time, and make a diving roll back out of the doorway, just as a heavy portcullis drops across the entrance.

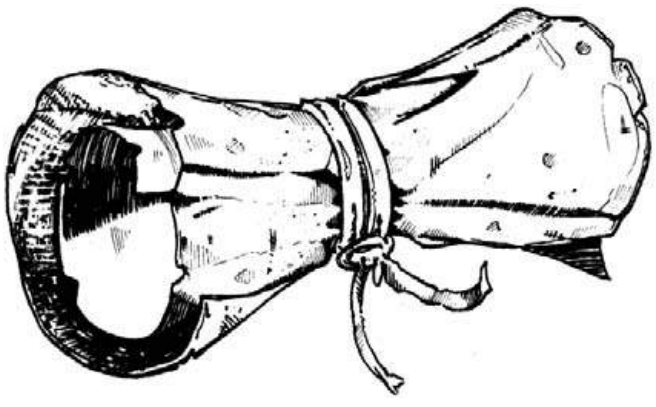
You hide in the shadows with bated breath, ready for action, but it seems as though you have not been seen. Will you now investigate:

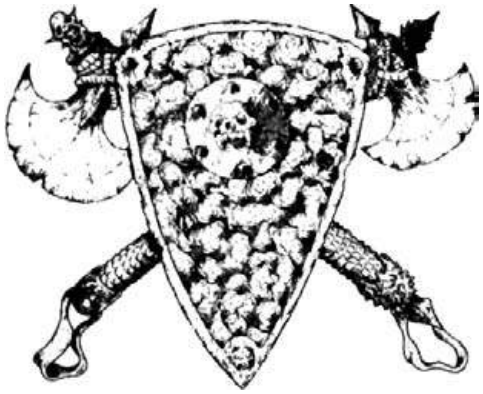
The well?	Turn to	**13**
The South-East tower?	Turn to	**23**
The door in the North wall?	Turn to	**74**

3

You stagger to your feet, and, head turned away, walk towards the horrendous scene. Eyes closed, you slowly push the door shut on the horror beyond. Will you now:

Open the casket?	Turn to	**133**
Leave?	Turn to	**81**





4

You wipe the bottle clean on your sleeve and see that it is made of crystal, with a silver stopper and silver runes inlaid in it. You are a little disappointed to see that it is empty, but on a chain around the neck of the bottle is a small slab of pure Rubidium. This legendary metal is fabled for its magical ability to open sealed objects.

The bottle itself is of fine workmanship, and must be of some value, so you put it in your backpack together with the Rubidium slab. Turn to **122**.

5

You throw the stone into the bowl, and it rolls around for a long time, before finally coming to rest on a segment marked with a snake symbol.

A plume of blue smoke begins to rise from the bowl, and slowly forms itself into a gigantic SERPENT. Its scales glisten in the torchlight as its forked tongues flickers, sensing your location, and it draws back its head, deadly fangs gleaming. You draw your sword for battle – turn to **114**.

6

	Dexterity	*Strength*
OGRE:	7	10

If you win, turn to **115**.

7

The tunnel heads Northwards for a short distance and then turns to the West. Shortly afterwards, it ends at a small door. Will you:

Go through the door? Turn to **109**

Go back East and South past the stairs? Turn to **119**

8

The walls are lined with shelves, but most are empty, and covered in dust and cobwebs. Only two shelves have anything of interest upon them. One holds a number of dusty scrolls, covered in indecipherable writing. The other has three old, leather-bound books resting on it. The books are entitled: 'Acid', 'Charms', and 'The Eye of the Sorcerer'.

If you have met a Goblin who has told you about the items needed for the Spell of Soul Capture, you may either: trust his words – turn to **41**. Or, alternatively, preferring to trust your own judgement, turn to **182**. If you have not met the goblin, turn to **117**.

9

You leave through the East door and enter an uneven rock-walled tunnel that leads Eastwards and then turns to the South. It comes to an end at a rusty iron door. On the wall by the side of the door is a hook, hanging from which is a large iron key, and set into the door is a panel. Turn to **150**.

10

You have no protection from Kruglach's evil magic. Your adventure ends here.

11

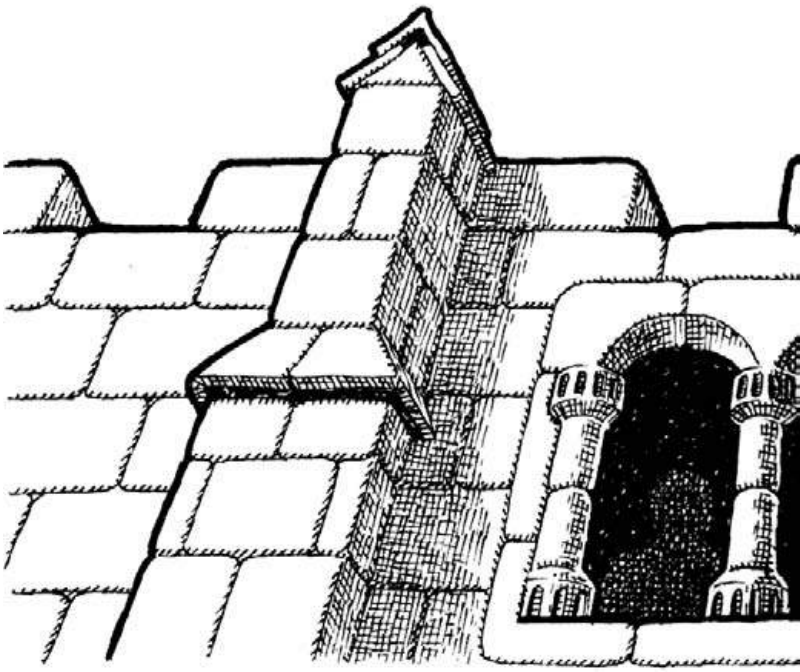
You manage to swim safely to the far side of the moat and drag yourself out of its slimy waters onto the bank by the door of the fortress.

12

The Goblin lies dead at your feet, its foul blood swiftly congealing. A quick check of his body reveals nothing of interest, and you are just considering what to do next when you hear more voices – it sounds as though a great deal more GOBLIN GUARDS are approaching, and you can hear them grumbling about the entrance being left open.

There is a grating noise from below, and, realising that the entrance is about to be sealed off, you race down the stairs and make a diving roll through the doorway, just as a heavy portcullis drops down.

You wait for a moment, holding your breath, your back pressed against the tower walls, but all is still again. It seems you have escaped detection so



far, but you realise that the dead Goblin's body will be discovered at any moment, and you must move away from this tower quickly. Will you investigate:

The well?	Turn to	**13**
The South-East tower	Turn to	**23**
The door in the North wall	Turn to	**74**

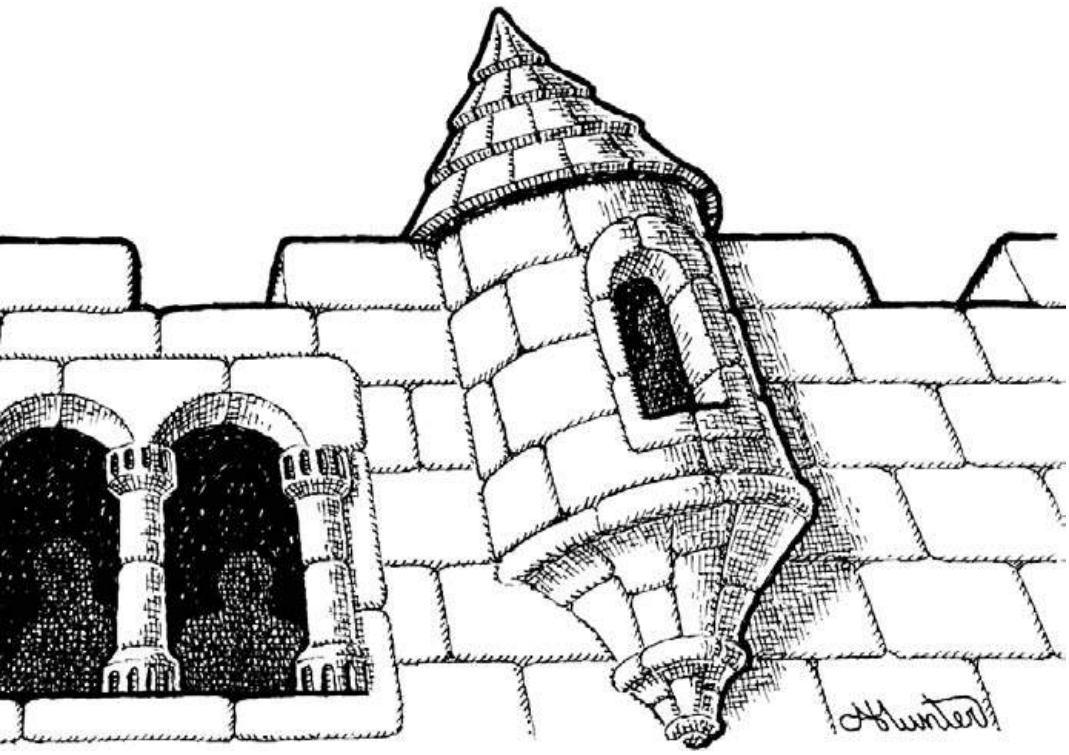
13

The well is made from the same grey stone that paves the courtyard. You peer inside and see it is about ten feet deep, with murky black water at the bottom. The inside of the well is coated with slimy moulds and fungi, and the smell is very unpleasant. Will you:

Throw a pebble into the well?	Turn to	**24**
Climb down into the well?	Turn to	**83**

14

The stone rolls around the dish, finally coming to rest in a black segment. Your legs shake and the room becomes hazy, as you struggle to keep your balance. Lose three Strength points, and, if you are still alive, you decide to get out quickly – turn to **44**.



19

Without all three ingredients, you cannot hope to perform the spell, and you have no alternative but to try to fight Kruglach with your sword – turn to **90**.

20

Desperately, you shout the word that had appeared so briefly before you on the page, and Kruglach's black fire dissolves into soot, and falls at your feet. Turn to **177**.

21

Taking a deep breath, you leap onto the drawbridge and run across it as fast as you can. Your lack of caution is a mistake, as the drawbridge collapses under you! – turn to **54**.

15

The book burns your hands badly, giving off choking black smoke, before you manage to drop it. Lose two Dexterity points, and turn to **128**.

16

If you wish to throw the stone into the black-and-white bowl, turn to **153**. If you would rather try your luck with the other bowl, turn to **84**.

17

You walk through the door into a small library. Turn to **8**.

18

You back slowly away from him, your sword point never wavering from his heart as you fumble for the keys. Realising your intention, the man's face twists into a lupine snarl, and his eyes glow hot and red. His muscles tense, ready to pounce, and although you are sure you have the advantage, you will have to fight. Turn to **179**.

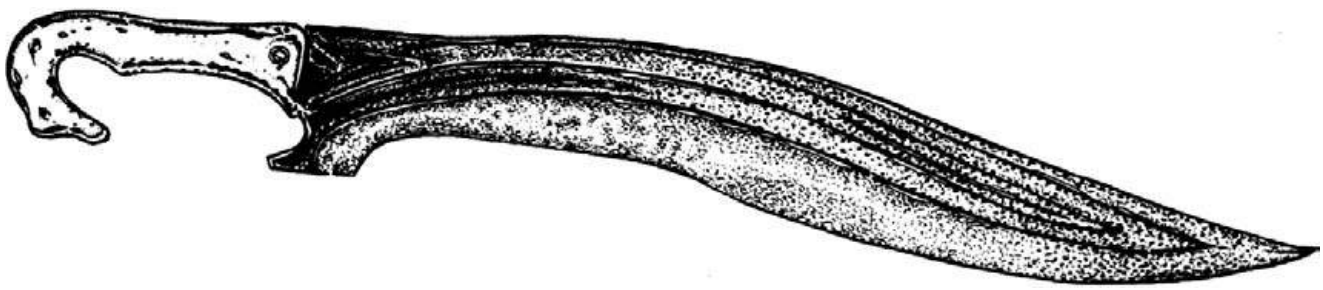
22

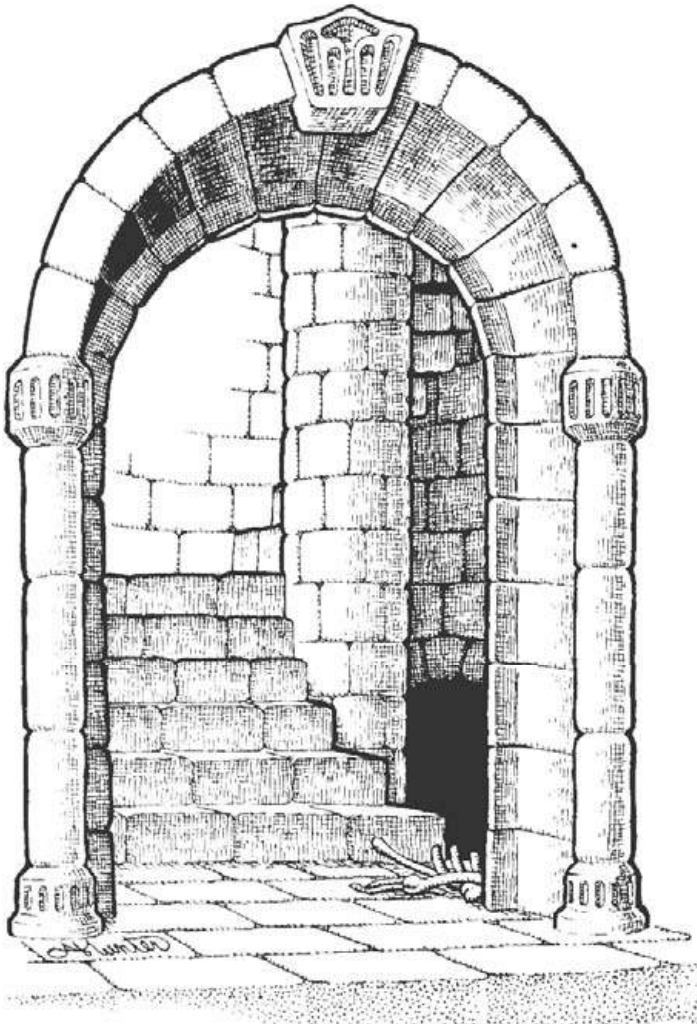
The casket has no keyhole, and you are unable to force it open. However, you notice that the front of the casket has a small square of Rubidium set into it, in which is an indentation. If you have a small slab of pure Rubidium, turn to **101**. If not, will you:

Smash the casket with your sword?	Turn to **161**
Try the door in the East wall?	Turn to **140**
Leave the tower?	Turn to **141**

23

There is a small door at the foot of the South-East look-out tower. It opens easily inwards and you see a narrow staircase spiralling upwards into the dark. Warily, you walk up the spiral staircase, until you step onto a small square landing, facing North. You walk forward onto the stone-flagged floor. On your right, in the East wall, is a door, and on your left is a small casket. Inscribed on the casket are some words which you cannot quite read. Will you go over and read the inscription? If so, turn to **113**. Or will you try the door in the East wall? If so, turn to **142**.





24

You pick up a pebble from the ground by the side of the well and drop it into the water. From the sound it makes, you gather that the water is not deep – a few inches, perhaps, and you climb down into the well – turn to **83**.

25

You go out through the door into a short, dark passage North that ends at another door. Will you:

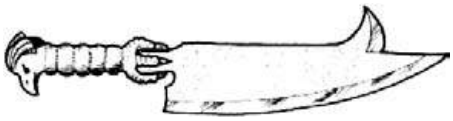
Open the door and go in? Turn to **163**
Listen at the door? Turn to **124**

26

You break open the cage, put it on the floor and the rabbits scamper out. Then the paper that lined the bottom of their cage catches your eye. It has some writing on it, and you take it out of the cage to examine it. You read:

"If werewolf takes the form of man,
Detect his guise you never can.
But when he's in his wolven shape,
Wolfsbane and silver his life take."

You read this through several times, then put it away in your backpack and leave through the East door – turn to **194**.



27

Even as you reach out, cautiously, towards it, the floor opens beneath your feet, and you fall badly to the ground twenty feet below. Lose six Strength points. You spend a few seconds mentally registering the fact that no bones seem to be broken, and then slowly stand and look around. You are in a small, dimly-lit cave, and even as your eyes adjust to the poor light, a great roar of anger alerts you to danger.

Bearing down on you is a giant of a man, with a single eye in his forehead. His face is half-covered by a mane of tangled hair, and he is wielding a spiked club. The CYCLOPS circles you, making angry grunting noises, swinging his club. You prepare for a fight – turn to **159**.

28

You lie down upon the cold, hard slab, and reach up to draw the glass helmet down over your head. Immediately, your head is surrounded by flashes of vividly coloured light, and a loud buzzing sound assaults your ears. Panic surges through you, and you thrust the helmet away and jump off the table. The room spins crazily, and you clutch at your head until the dizziness passes, wondering what effect the device has had upon you. Roll one dice.

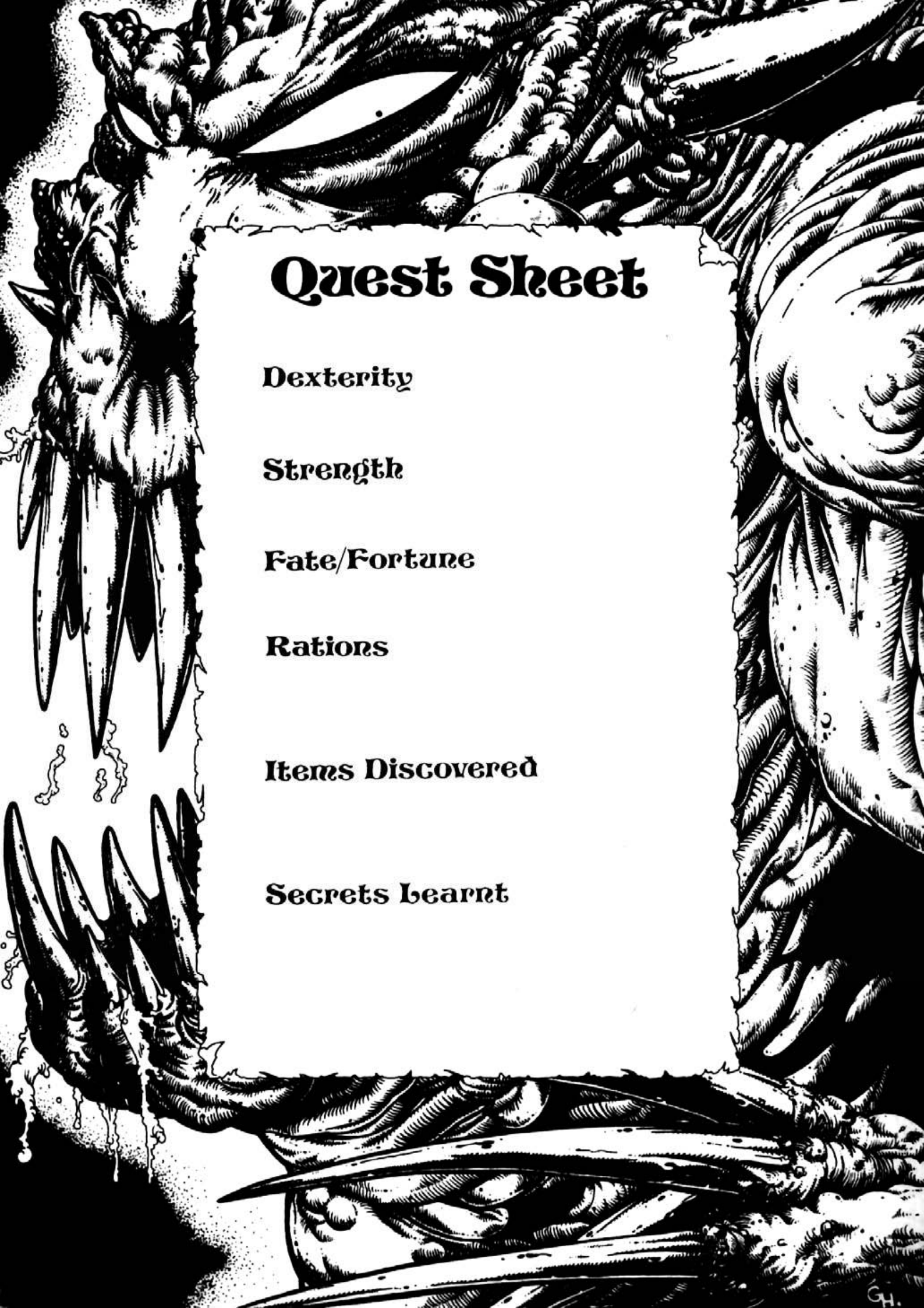
If you throw a 1, 2, or :3, turn to **105**. If you throw a 4, or 5, turn to **68**. If you throw a 6, turn to **37**.

29

Do you have the two protective talismans? If so, turn to **116**. If not, turn to **120**.

30

You just manage to reach the jewel with the tips of your fingers and carefully draw your hand back to examine your prize. It appears to be some form of amulet, carved from a single, glittering black stone, with the symbol of a holy cross engraved upon it. You place the amulet in your backpack and walk down to the door in the South wall – turn to **69**.



Quest Sheet

Dexterity

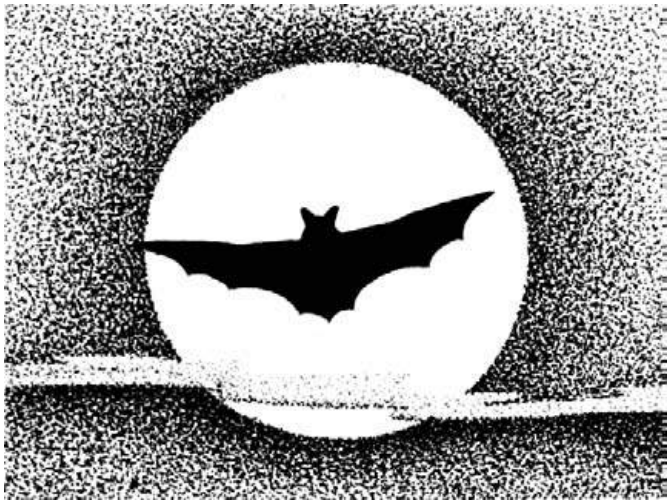
Strength

Fate/Fortune

Rations

Items Discovered

Secrets Learnt



31

You manage to retain your balance and proceed safely across to the door of the fortress – turn to **51**.

32

Trembling with fear, the Goblin tells you that he does not remember hearing of any protective talismans that may be found in this dark fortress. You prod a little deeper with your sword point to try to improve his memory, and with a little squeak of terror, he tells you that in the Great Hall of the fortress is an enchanted statue of a Unicorn, the horn of which is supposed to possess great powers against evil. You ask him where the Great Hall is and he points frantically to the North, trying to squirm away from your sword. You wonder whether he is lying – turn to **52**.

33

You smash the door open with a mighty kick, and fall, rolling, into the room. Sword drawn, you get to your feet and look around. You have time to register the fact that you are in a small room with a door in the North wall; the only piece of furniture is a low, oblong table.

A movement on your left catches your eye, and you swiftly turn to face a creature twice your height. From its huge, flat head protrude two coal-black eyes, and its tubular mouth is filled with broad teeth. It lumbers towards you on its powerful legs, making a hissing, grinding noise. The wide body is protected by a tough carapace, and you take up your fighting position as it reaches towards you with its four deadly arms. The upper two each end in vicious claws, like a giant crab's, while the lower two arms have huge flat slabs for hands.

This is a BONE-GRINDER, a creature that strips the flesh from its victims before eating their bones; although extremely strong, it is slow-moving, and you must use your agility to stay out of its clutches. Because of its enormous strength, deduct *four* Strength points from your score, rather than two, each time you lose a round in your battle. Successful blows from you will cause the monster two Strength points of damage, as usual. Now you must fight to the death.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
BONE-GRINDER:	7	16

If you win, turn to **190**.

34

You may now look at the book of 'Acid' – turn to **154**; 'The Eye of the Sorcerer' – turn to **95**; or, if you have looked at all the books you want to, turn to **135**.

35

	Dexterity	*Strength*
GARGOYLE:	9	12

If you win, turn to **196**.

36

You dispose of the man with one swift sweep of your sword, and then turn to investigate the South end of the passage – turn to **119**.

37

The helmet has made you temporarily invulnerable. The next three non-magical wounds inflicted upon you will do no damage – turn to **138**.

38

You raise your sword high above your head and bring it crashing down onto the casket – and there is a flash of black light.

Blinded, you stumble about the room. Throw two dice. If the score is the same as, or less than your Fate/Fortune score, turn to **121**. If it is greater, turn to **93**.

39

Holding the three ingredients cupped in your hands, you speak the words that Raaka Dihar told you of in the forest of Regnad: "Kruglach nothrog gethod." For a breathless moment there is absolute silence, and the air in the tiny cave is filled with a stifling quiet. Even the two red flames cease their flickering dance and hold steady as if frozen in time.

Then you hear a distant moaning sound that gets louder and louder until it erupts into the cave with a deafening roar, accompanied by a mighty wind that slams you against the cold rock wall. You see Kruglach stagger in a whirl of black robes and then drop to the dark, icy floor. The red flickering stars spin crazily, and you close your eyes and press your hands to your ears in an attempt to block out this assault on your senses.

Then abruptly, everything stops: the howling roar ceases, the air is still and the floor is stable beneath your feet – turn to **200**.

40

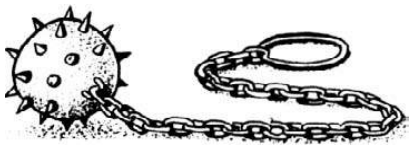
You cross the courtyard with great care, keeping in the shadows, until you reach the foot of the South-West tower. There is a small doorway in the base, but it is blocked by a heavy portcullis, and try as you might, you cannot move it.

There is a slow murmuring from above: it sounds as though this tower is occupied by a number of guards. Cautiously you back away. Will you now examine:

The well? Turn to **13**
The door in the North wall? Turn to **74**

41

You remember what the Goblin told you about the location of the Eye of the Sorcerer, so you look at this book first – turn to **95**.



42

As you venture cautiously up the stairs, your sword at the ready, you see a glimmer of light above you. At length, you emerge out onto the top of the look-out tower and are surprised to see an ugly little Goblin Guard fast asleep at his post. The rumbling sound you heard was his snoring! So this is why your entry into the fortress went unnoticed! Will you:

Kill the Guard as he sleeps? Turn to **2**
Wake him up with a gentle prod of your sword to question him? Turn to **112**

43

There is a doorway at the foot of the tower, and you open it warily to see a narrow staircase spiralling upwards. You walk up and step into a small, square landing, facing North. Walking forwards onto the stone-flagged floor, you see that there is a small casket on your left, and a door in the East wall. Otherwise the room appears to be empty. There are some words inscribed on the lid of the casket, but you cannot quite make them out. Will you go over and read the inscription? If so, turn to **118**. If you wish to open the door in the East wall instead, turn to **140**.

44

The only other door out of the room is in the North wall, and you cautiously try it – turn to **25**.

45

There is one other door out of the room, in the North wall and you have no choice but to go that way – turn to **85**.

46

You go back East and soon find yourself at the T-junction, but you ignore the way South that leads back to the courtyard, and continue Eastwards – turn to **176**.

47

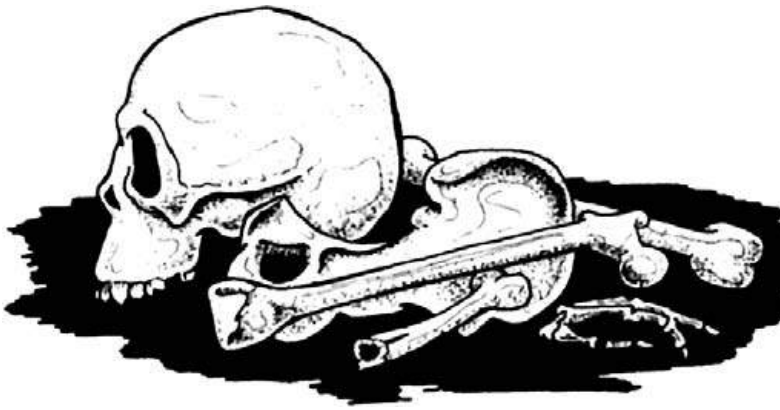
You manage to creep up to the sleeping figure without disturbing him. Will you:

Kill him as he sleeps?	Turn to	**36**
Wake him up and question him?	Turn to	**97**

48

Eyes closed tightly, you slowly get to your feet and push the door shut on the terrible scenes beyond; gradually the air becomes still again, and you consider what to do. Will you:

Open the casket?	Turn to	**22**
Leave the tower?	Turn to	**141**



49

A brief, secret smile escapes Teel's lips as you agree to let him accompany you. A flicker of doubt crosses your mind, but you tell yourself that he is unarmed and weakened from imprisonment, that you have a strong sword and will remain constantly on your guard. You leave together to investigate the South end of the passage – turn to **119**.

50

As you approach, you hear low voices complaining about being on watch again. This tower is obviously well-guarded, and you move forward with caution.

There is a doorway in the base of the tower, but it is blocked by a heavy portcullis. Your efforts to lift the portcullis, while keeping as quiet as you can, are in vain, and, frustrated, you look about the courtyard again. Will you now investigate:

The South-East tower?	Turn to	**43**
The door in the North wall?	Turn to	**74**

51

The door is huge, made of dark oak with thick iron bands across it. It has a large, iron ring for a handle. On each side of the door, gnarled ivy and damp moss cover the black stone walls. You try the handle – turn to **171**.

52

Will you now kill the Goblin outright? If so, turn to **2**; or, disliking the idea of cold-blooded murder, let him draw his sword and hope to defeat him in a fair fight? – turn to **92**.

53

You slip, and the slime-covered rope slides through your fingers like a wet snake. You land in an undignified heap in the sludge at the bottom of the well. The water on the surface was only a few inches deep, but it concealed about a foot of mud and rotting vegetation. This sludge, however unpleasant, has broken your fall and it is only your pride that is injured – turn to **63**.

54

You plunge into the foul water, which is thick with scum, and icy cold. Once over the initial shock, you begin to swim towards the far bank and the fortress door. Suddenly, you feel something in the water brush against your leg and then a cold tentacle wraps itself around your ankle, dragging you under! You struggle frantically and manage to break free, gasping for air as you break the surface. A slimy, green domed head with one unblinking eye rises up out of the water before you! Will you:

Make a break for it and try to swim to the shore? Turn to **61**
Fight the Moat Monster? Turn to **91**

55

Carved into the pool wall beside the plaque is a faded inscription which reads: "To release the hand, speak the name of the weapon that lies hidden in Thors words." You puzzle over this for some time, realising it must be an anagram of some kind. Can you solve the anagram?

If so Turn to **149**
If not Turn to **160**

56

As you approach the throne, you see that it has two buttons embedded into the right armrest. One button is black and the other is white. Will you press:

The white button? Turn to **187**
The black button? Turn to **127**

57

The door is locked, so you take the large, iron key from the hook and find it fits the lock perfectly. You turn it to the left and, with a loud clunk, the door swings open – turn to **172**.

58

Without the magical container in which Kruglach's soul can be imprisoned, you cannot perform the Spell of Soul Capture. You have no alternative but to try to fight Kruglach with your sword – turn to **90**.

59

Will you:

Lie down on the table and place the helmet over your head? Turn to **28**
Examine the bookshelf? Turn to **167**
Leave the lab? Turn to **158**

60

You stretch over the edge of the pool and reach out to take the jewel from the hand. Throw two dice. If the numbers on both dice add up to the same as or less than your Fate/Fortune Score, turn to **30**. If they add up to more than your Fate/Fortune Score, turn to **80**.

61

Throw two dice. If the numbers on both dice add up to the same as or less than your Fate/Fortune Score, turn to **11**. If they add up to more than your Fate/Fortune Score, turn to **111**.

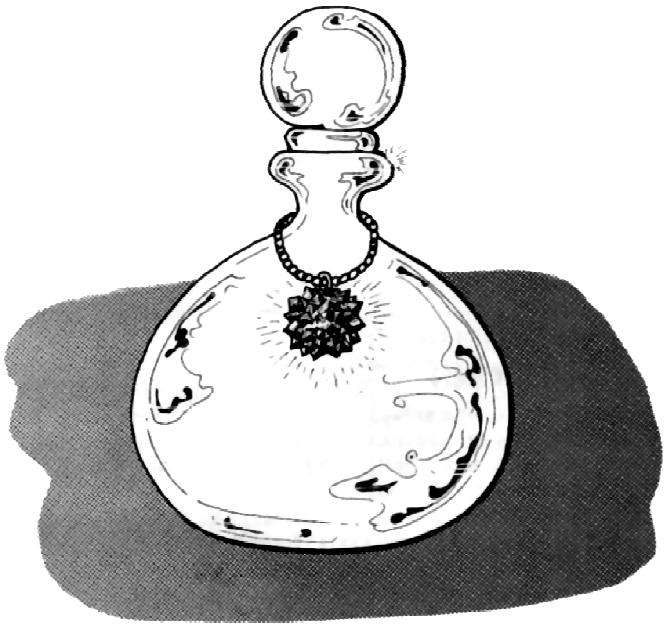
62

Trembling with fear, the Goblin tells you that Kruglach spends nearly all of his time in the maze of dungeons underneath the fortress. The entrance to the dungeons is down a hidden staircase in the store room. You ask him where the store room is and he points frantically to the North, trying to squirm away from your sword. You step back from the cowering Goblin, wondering whether to believe him. Turn to **52**.

63

Your disturbance of the mud causes a rush of tiny bubbles up to the surface; and then, slowly, a small bottle, covered in grime and rotting leaves emerges. Will you:

Examine the bottle? Turn to **4**
Leave the strange bottle alone and climb out of the well? Turn to **122**



64

A mist rises from the pages, and forms into a fearsome face. Your fear recedes as you recognise the features of Raaka Dihar. The illusion speaks:

"The Demons of the Underworld have not only names, but numbers," grates the familiar other-world voice. "The number of Kruglach is not, as many believe, 79. The evil number must be added to this, and then the sum doubled; this is Kruglach's number. Knowing his number, you will learn a sacred word which will afford you some protection against Kruglach's evil, and aid you in capturing his soul." When you have worked out Kruglach's number, turn to the section which has the same number. If you cannot work it out, turn to **75**.

65

With an agonised shriek of protesting hinges, the trapdoor opens up and over, to reveal a wooden staircase descending into the darkness. It is unlikely that you will find Kruglach on this upper level of the fortress, which has obviously been little used. So, after taking a torch from the store room wall, you descend into the blackness – turn to **156**.

66

Will you examine:

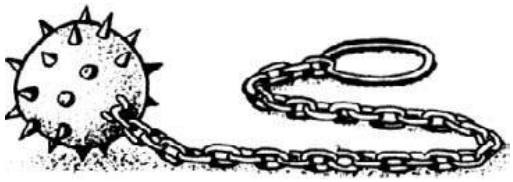
The throne?	Turn to	**56**
The statue of the Unicorn?	Turn to	**145**
The statue of the humanoid?	Turn to	**195**
Or will you leave the Hall?	Turn to	**178**

67

As quietly as you can, you take the keys from the hook and insert one into the lock. The door swings silently open, and you advance towards the sleeping man, your sword in your hand. Throw two dice.

If the numbers on both dice add up to the same as or less than your Fate/Fortune Score, turn to **47**.

If they add up to more than your Fate/Fortune Score, turn to **137**.



68

The helmet has decreased your Dexterity by one point – turn to **138**.

69

The South door out of the cavern is huge and dark, and there is something strangely foreboding about its utter blackness. It reflects no light, and looks more like a gateway into oblivion than any solid door of earthly material. Will you:

Open the door?	Turn to	**152**
Go back to the lab and leave through the East door there?	Turn to	**9**

70

Instantly, the Unicorn gives a gentle sigh and crumbles silently into a fine, white dust. Only its horn remains intact. You are filled with almost overwhelming sadness, but hope gradually returns as you realise that you have gained the talisman of the Unicorn horn, and you pick it up and put it into your backpack. You decide that you had better leave quickly – turn to **178**.

71

You proceed very carefully across the drawbridge, testing each rotten plank with your foot before putting your full weight on it. You are almost across when the plank before you suddenly gives way and you struggle frantically to keep your balance. Throw two dice.

If the numbers on both dice add up to the same as or less than your Fate/Fortune Score, turn to **31**.

If they add up to more than your Fate/Fortune Score, turn to **54**.

72

Lose three Strength points as, slowly, the room comes back into focus, and you can see clearly again. If you are still alive, will you:

Leave the tower?	Turn to	**141**
Try the door in the East wall of the tower?	Turn to	**140**

73

You prise open the creature's mouth and extract two yellow teeth, reeling at the foul stench of its breath. There is an iron door in the South wall of the cave. You go through into another tunnel, which heads South, then West and leads you to a large black door. There is something foreboding about its utter blackness. It reflects no light and looks more like a gateway into oblivion than any solid door of earthly material. You came here to find Kruglach, and he is surely not far beyond this door. Holding your sword before you, you reach out to open the door – turn to **152**.

74

The door opens easily inwards, and you look beyond it into a narrow passage North, dimly lit by flickering torches. Turn to **103**.

75

You puzzle over this for some time, until, unable to work it out, you sigh and replace the book. Turn to **34**.

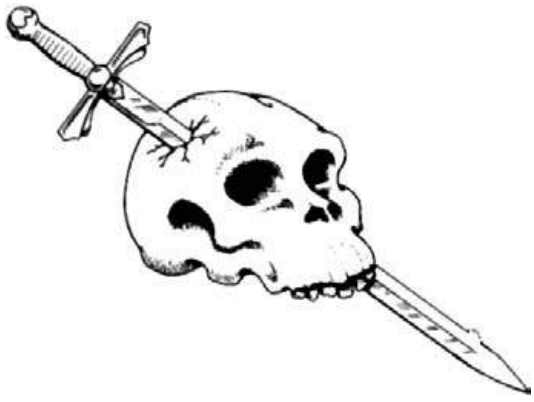
76

You begin to investigate the sacks and other rubbish – then freeze as you hear, faintly at first, but then more steadily, a grunting, crunching sound.

Slowly, the source of the noise becomes apparent, as into view stumbles a lumbering THUNDER-GRUNT. Its massive feet give it great stability, and its long arms, ending in spiked talons, whistle through the air as it strikes at you. The massive, low-domed head carries a mouthful of needle-sharp teeth, and you realise that you must get in a swift, accurate sword-thrust. If you throw two sixes together when calculating your Fighting Power, turn to **125**. Otherwise, you fight to the death as normal.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
THUNDERGRUNT:	9	16

If you win, turn to **175**.



77

Holding out the amulet, you call out the protective word that had appeared so briefly before you upon the page, and Kruglach's black fire falls as ashes at your feet. Turn to **177**.

78

"You should not so lightly reject an offer of aid," he snarls, and he leaps past you to vanish through the door you entered by. You shrug your shoulders, mildly surprised at his reaction, and then turn to investigate the South end of the passage – turn to **119**.

79

You take the golden rope from your backpack and, with a quick prayer to any Gods that might be listening, you whirl the rope above your head and then swing it out towards the Cyclops. Throw two dice.

If the numbers on both dice add up to the same as, or less than your Dexterity score, turn to **99**.

If they add up to more than your Dexterity score, turn to **147**.

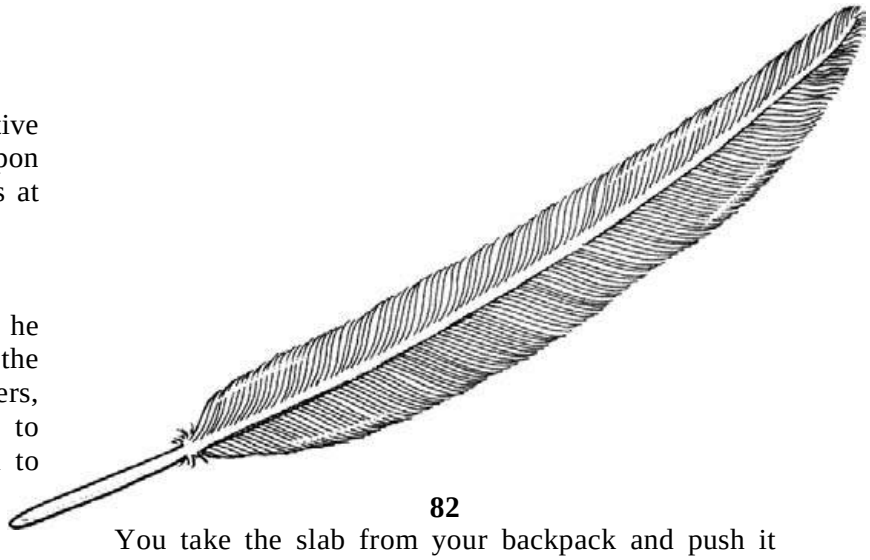
80

As you strain to reach the jewel, you lean too far, and tip head first into the black pool! The liquid in the pool is acid and your hands and face feel afire. Roll one dice and lose that many Strength points. If you are still alive, you climb, shaking, out of the pool, and decide you had better leave the jewel and go down to the door in the South wall. Turn to **69**.

81

You walk down the spiral staircase, and back out into the courtyard, keeping a watchful eye. Will you now:

Examine the well?	Turn to	**13**
Investigate the South-West tower?	Turn to	**40**
Leave by the door in the North wall?	Turn to	**74**



82

You take the slab from your backpack and push it into the indentation. There is a slow, steady pulsing of light, until gradually the whole of the casket glows blood-red.

As you shield your eyes, the light fades. Your slab of Rubidium has welded itself into the front of the casket, and is irretrievable. But slowly the lid rises, revealing a single, gossamer-soft white feather. Tentatively, you reach out for the feather of the mythical flying horse, and place it with great care in your backpack. The lid of the casket silently closes again, and locks, but you have one of the protective talismans! Will you now:

Leave?	Turn to	**81**
Try the door in the East wall of the tower?	Turn to	**142**

83

Using the rope from your backpack, you lower yourself into the well. The slime of the wall makes your descent very tricky, as it clings to the rope and to your clothing when you brush against it. Throw two dice.

If the numbers on both dice add up to the same as or less than your Fate/Fortune Score, turn to **88**.

If they add up to more than your Fate/Fortune Score, turn to **53**.

84

Throw one dice. If you score 1, 3 or 5, turn to **5**. If you score 2, 4 or 6, turn to **134**.

85

You go through the North door into a short corridor that heads North, then East and ends at another door. You cautiously open the door and step through into the room beyond – turn to **189**.

86

You arrive back at the junction and this time continue West – turn to **162**.

87

There are two other doors out of the Hall, in the South and North walls. You decide against going South, as you realise it will take you back to the courtyard, so you leave through the North door – turn to **186**.

88

With great care, you lower yourself to the bottom of the well, and, tentatively, dip your boot into the murky water. It is only a few inches deep and from what you can gather, the ground underneath is firm. You put more weight onto your foot, and to your dismay you sink up to your knee into a foul sludge of mud and rotting vegetation, hidden under the surface – turn to **63**.

89

You go through the door into a huge room, which you realise was probably once the Great Hall of the Fortress. A large, long table stands before you with eight chairs drawn up along each side, and one larger, more ornate chair at its head. At the North end of the room, upon a raised platform, is a beautiful throne, carved of rich, deep golden wood. On either side of the throne stand two unusual statues. The one to the West is of an ugly humanoid, with a long pointed tail and horrifically twisted features. In contrast, the one to the East is of a prancing, white unicorn – strikingly beautiful compared to the deformed creature opposite it.

Everything is covered in dust and fine cobwebs, and apparently has not been touched for many years. Three doors lead out of the Great Hall: one in the North wall, one in the West and another in the South.

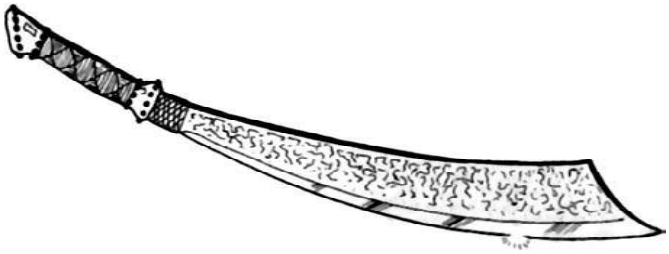
Have you asked a Goblin about the location of one of the protective talismans?

If so — Turn to **165**
If not — Turn to **66**

90

As you raise up your blade before Kruglach, he throws back his head and laughs – a dark, liquid sound that would cause the stoutest of hearts to quail. You lick your dry lips, and grip your sword tightly with both hands. Your quest may end here, but you will not give up without a fight.

"You mortal fool," Kruglach sneers. "You cannot touch me with that earthly blade!" Then before you have a chance to strike, he raises his hands and black flame shoots forth to engulf you! Do you have a black amulet with the symbol of a cross, or have you learnt the number of Kruglach? If so, turn to **110**. If not – turn to **10**.



91

Lose one Dexterity point for the duration of this battle, since you are fighting at a disadvantage in the water.

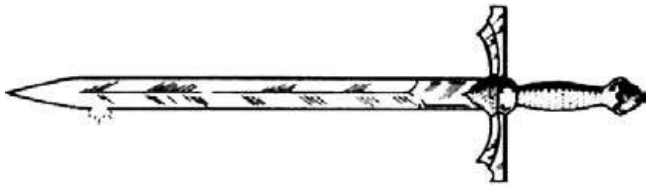
	Dexterity	*Strength*
MOAT MONSTER:	8	14

If you throw a 6 when calculating your *Fighting Strength* in this battle, turn to **131**. If you win without throwing a 6, turn to **11**.

92

	Dexterity	*Strength*
GOBLIN GUARD:	9	6

If you win, turn to **12**.



93

Stumbling blindly about the room, you fall heavily, get up, and then step forward into thin air! You crash back down the spiral staircase, each step cutting into your body, until you fall in a heap at the foot of the stairs – your sword still firmly clenched in your fist. Lose five Strength points.

Slowly, your senses return, and you look warily about the courtyard, but can see no immediate danger. Will you now:

Examine the well? — Turn to **13**
Leave by the North door? — Turn to **74**
Investigate the South-West tower? — Turn to **40**

94

You move cautiously across to the tower, keeping in the shadows. You can make out a doorway in the base of the tower, but it is sealed off by a heavy portcullis. Beyond that is what looks like a spiral staircase leading up to the top of the tower.

You try in vain to lift the portcullis, and then freeze – you can hear several voices. You glimpse a number of GOBLIN GUARDS coming down the spiral staircase – the noise you made must have disturbed them. Swiftly, you dash towards the door in the North wall, trying to keep in the shadows – turn to **74**.

95

As you open the book, a strange prickling like pins and needles tingles through your fingers, and you sense that great magic is here. The pages of the book are blank, but the middle of every page has had a circle cut out of it, making a hollow nest in the centre of the book. Sitting in this, partially wrapped in a piece of old cloth, is a circular golden amulet with the image of a single eye engraved upon it: The Eye of the Sorcerer! This is one of the items you need for the Spell of Soul Capture and, pleased with your find, you put it carefully into your backpack – turn to **135**.

96

You climb through the hole into a tiny passage, which is just big enough for you to crawl in. You have only gone a few feet, when the passage ends at another wall. You methodically press each stone block until you find the hidden trigger that opens the door at this end. As you scramble out of the hole, the wall slides back into place, leaving no indication that the passage ever existed – turn to **194**.

97

You prod the man gently with the tip of your sword, till he reluctantly awakes and turns to face you. When he realises that you are not his jailer, he slowly sits up and smiles, revealing gleaming white teeth. There is a long silence.

"Well, are you going to kill me or set me free?" he asks at length, glancing at your sword.

You ask him who he is and how he came to be locked in this cage, and he tells you he is an adventurer called Teel, who was captured and imprisoned by Goblins, many months ago. He asks if he can accompany you out of the fortress, and it is obvious he bears little love for Kruglach. Will you:

Let him come with you?	Turn to	**49**
Free him, but tell him that you do not trust him to accompany you?	Turn to	**78**
Lock him back up in his cell?	Turn to	**18**

98

You peer through the tiny barred window behind the panel, and see a small dark cave beyond. There is hardly any light, but you can just make out the figure of a huge man slumped in a corner, gnawing on a bone. Could this be the Cyclops? If so, you need two of its teeth for the Spell of Soul Capture! Gripping your sword tightly, you take a deep breath and try to open the door – turn to **57**.

99

The rope shimmers in the torchlight like a golden serpent, and then falls gracefully down over the Cyclops' head. At once, a glazed expression clouds the creature's eye, and he sinks to the floor to sit motionless at your feet – turn to **73**.

100

After removing the hairs, you leave the cage and investigate the South end of the passage – turn to **119**.

101

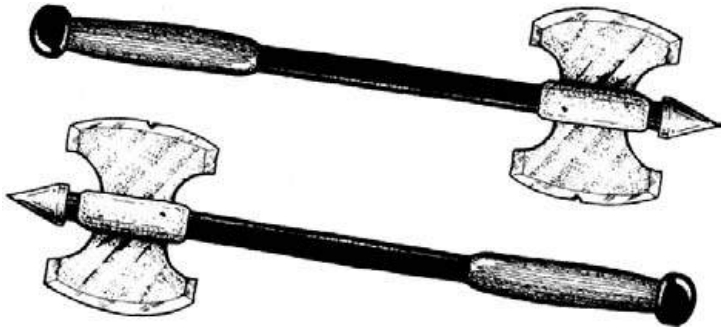
You take the small slab of Rubidium from your backpack and press it cautiously into the indentation. At once, the whole casket begins to glow, the glow increasing in intensity until you have to shield your eyes against the blood-red light.

Gradually, the light fades, and as it does, the lid of the casket opens. Your slab of Rubidium has welded itself permanently into the indentation but inside is a single white feather, as light as air and soft as silk. You take it out, and place it reverently in your backpack, as the lid silently closes and locks again – you have one of the protective talismans! Will you now:

Try the East door?	Turn to	**140**
Leave the tower?	Turn to	**141**

102

Trembling with fear, the Goblin tells you that he knows little of such matters, but he has heard that somewhere in the fortress is a magic Amulet that lends great power to the working of enchantments. The Amulet is known as The Eye of the Sorcerer, and he suspects that it is hidden somewhere in Kruglach's library. Further, he has heard talk of an *"evil number"*, the number 13. You ask him where the library is, and he points frantically to the North, trying to squirm away from your sword. You step back thoughtfully, wondering whether to believe him – turn to **52**.



103

The passage goes North for a short while and then ends at a T-junction. Will you go:

East? Turn to **176**

Or West? Turn to **162**

104

The SERPENT has scored a direct hit with its deadly poisonous fangs. You feel your Strength begin to drain away as it coils around you in a crushing grip. Your adventure ends here.

105

The helmet has increased your Strength by three points. Turn to **138**.

106

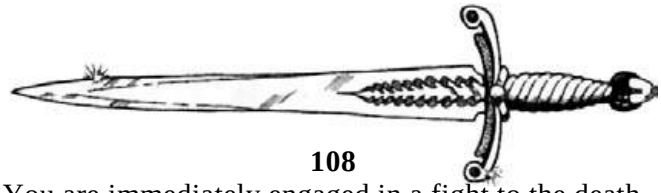
You go through the East door out of the library into a short passage. It leads Eastwards until it comes to an end at a large, black wooden door. Will you:

Open the door? Turn to **89**

Go back to the library and through the North door there? Turn to **85**

107

Turn to **27**.



108

You are immediately engaged in a fight to the death.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
WEREWOLF:	8	10

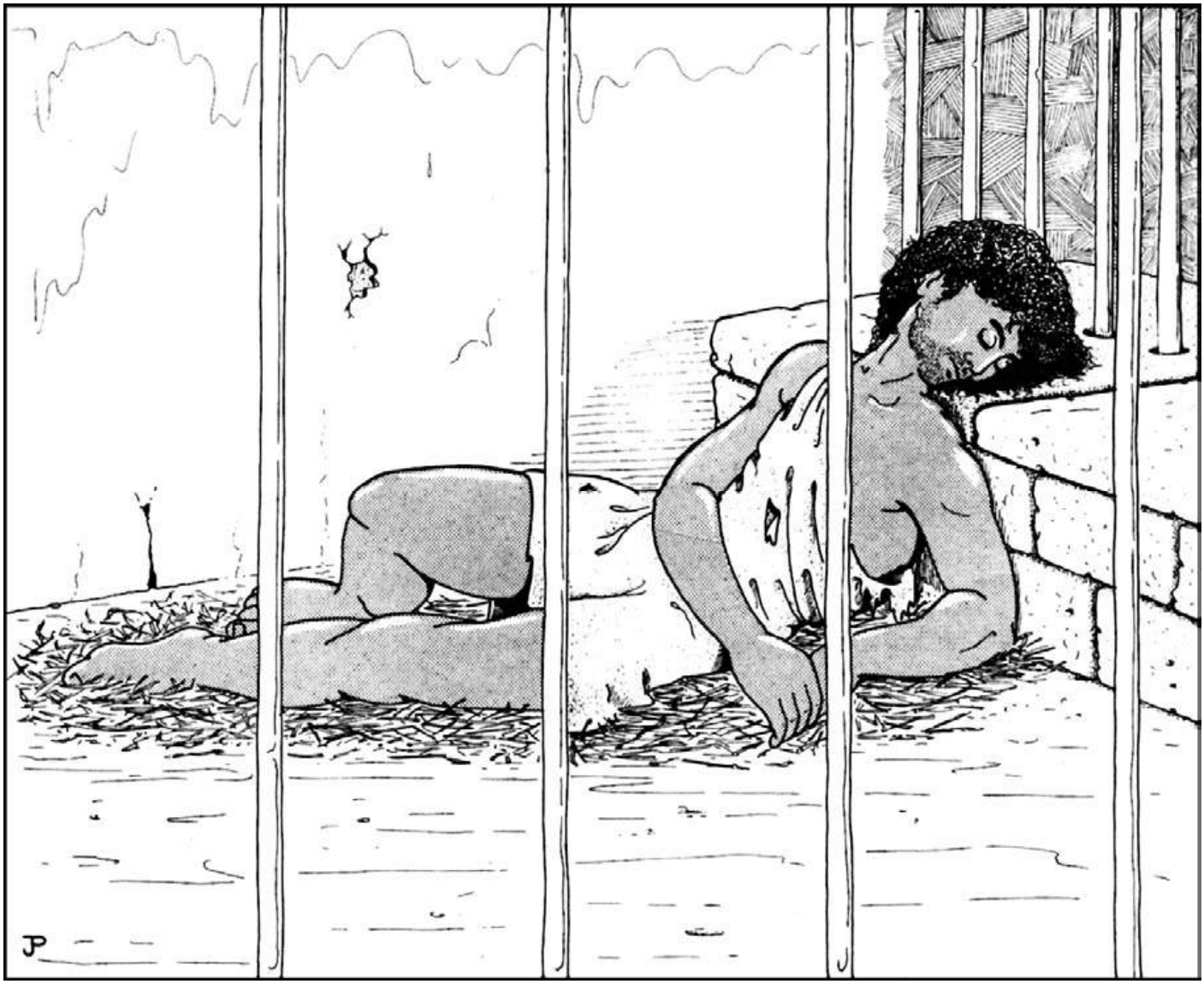
If you win, turn to **188**.

109

You open the door and go through into another passage. This one, however, is lighted by smoky torches, and goes South as far as you can see. The West side of the passage is made up entirely of thick iron bars, which are divided into three large cages. Two of the cages are empty, but the middle one is occupied by a sleeping figure. You move closer to investigate, and see that it is a young, dark-skinned man, dressed in tattered rags, with a mass of black, tangled hair. A bunch of keys hangs from a hook on the East wall of the passage. Will you:

Quietly unlock the cage and creep up while he sleeps? Turn to **67**

Investigate South down the passage? Turn to **119**



110

If you have learnt the number of Kruglach, and hence the protective word, turn to **20**. If you have a black amulet inscribed with a cross, turn to **198**. If you know the word, and also have the amulet, turn to **77**.

111

You swim as fast as you can away from the Moat Monster, but not fast enough! Once again you feel its tentacle curl around your foot, and you have no choice but to fight it – turn to **91**.

112

You prod at the Goblin's ribs with the tip of your sword, until, with much snorting and grumbling, he opens his bleary little eyes. The first thing he sees is your sword-point at his chest and he is suddenly very much awake!

"Make one sound and this sword will be in your heart," you promise. He nods frantically, trying to worm away from your blade, but you press closer. "I need answers to a few questions," you tell him. "Are you in a talkative mood?"

He nods again, eager to cooperate and save his warty hide. Will you ask him:

Where Kruglach is to be found?	Turn to **62**
Where you might find one of the items needed for the Spell of Soul Capture?	Turn to **102**
Where you can find a protective talisman?	Turn to **32**

113

You go over to look at the inscription. It reads:

"In memory of Arcturus, star of the North, winged horse of the Gods." Will you:

Open the casket?	Turn to **133**
Try the door in the East wall instead?	Turn to **142**

114

You close in fierce combat with the SERPENT. Its lethal fangs and strongly-muscled, twisting body make it a formidable enemy, and you have to employ all your fighting skills to avoid its deadly embrace.

Roll two dice. If the total is greater than your Dexterity score, turn to 104. If it is the same, or less, the battle progresses as normal:

	Dexterity	*Strength*
SERPENT:	10	12

If you win, turn to **143**.

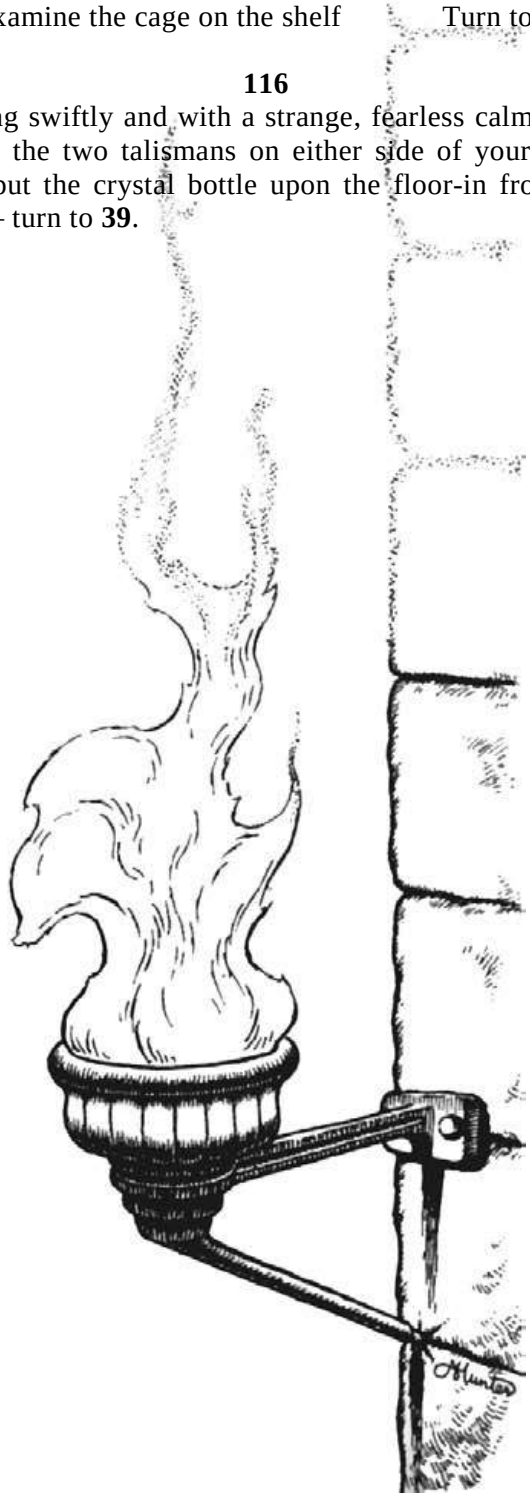
115

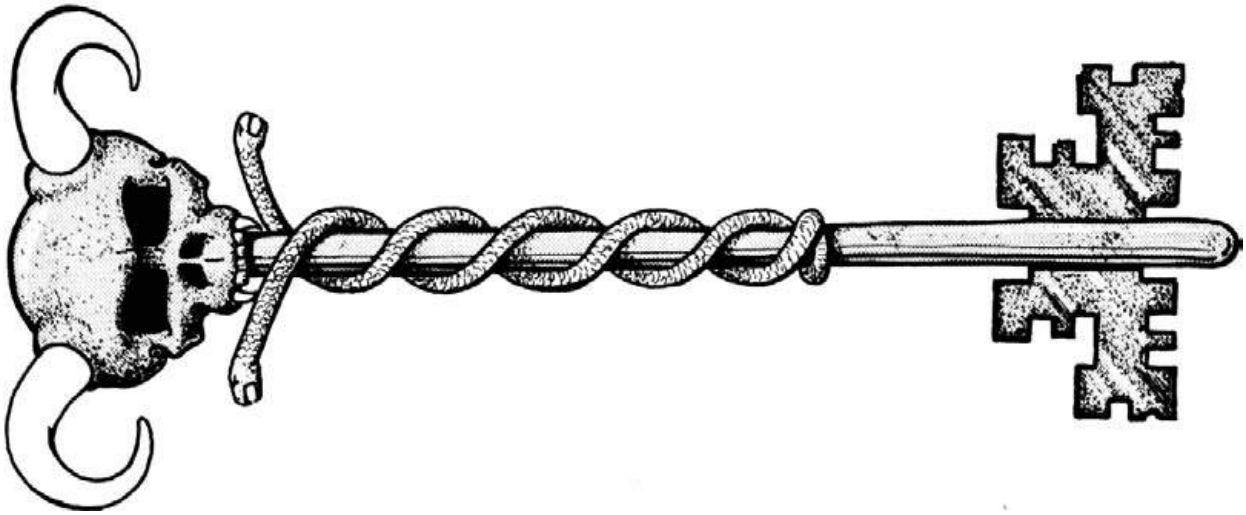
You search the body of the Ogre and find 12 pieces of silver and a selection of herbs – garlic, wolfsbane, thyme and marjoram. You may keep these if you wish. You can now:

Leave through a door in the East wall	Turn to **194**
Examine the cage on the shelf	Turn to **155**

116

Acting swiftly and with a strange, fearless calm, you place the two talismans on either side of your feet, and put the crystal bottle upon the floor-in front of you – turn to **39**.





117

Will you examine the book entitled:

'Acid'?	Turn to	**192**
'Charms'?	Turn to	**64**
'The Eye of the Sorcerer'?	Turn to	**95**

118

The inscription reads: "In memory of Arcturus, star of the North, winged horse of the Gods." Will you:

Open the casket?	Turn to	**22**
Try the door in the East wall of the tower?	Turn to	**140**

119

At the South end of the passage there is a door, which you are surprised to see is slightly ajar, and you peer through into what appears to be a laboratory of some kind. Your curiosity gets the better of you and you walk South through the door into the lab – turn to **146**.

120

Even though you do not have both protective talismans, you can still attempt to cast the Spell of Soul Capture.

If you have one talisman	Turn to	**139**
If you have no talismans	Turn to	**148**

121

Lose three Strength points as your senses slowly return. If you are still alive, will you now:

Leave?	Turn to	**81**
Examine the door in the East wall?	Turn to	**142**

122

You climb up out of the well with some difficulty, as your rope is now quite slippery. You manage, however, to make it safely to the top, and you may now examine:

The South-West tower	Turn to	**50**
The door in the North Wall	Turn to	**74**
The South-East tower	Turn to	**43**

123

Kruglach's face betrays no emotion as he advances, his sword pointed straight at your heart. You raise your shield and begin moving carefully. Kruglach may not possess great strength, but he is fast and clever – even as you prepare to defend yourself, his black sword, almost invisible in the gloom, whistles past your head, causing a slight flesh wound to your shoulder. Lose one Strength point.

You roll and turn. Kruglach's expression has not changed in the slightest. No mercy will be given or expected in this final confrontation. If you win this battle, turn to **197**.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
KRUGLACH:	13	8

124

You listen intently at the door for some time, but hear nothing, so you decide to go straight in – turn to **163**.

125

You dive beneath the flailing talons, and drive a straight sword-blow into the beast's heart. A terrible, howling roar fills the air, as the THUNDER-GRUNT slowly topples back in a lifeless heap at your feet. Turn to **175**.

126

You find nothing more of interest in the rotting sacks. But there is a trapdoor in the floor which you decide to investigate – turn to **65**.

127

As soon as you press the black button, eight, long, wickedly sharp spikes shoot up through the seats of the eight chairs at the table! Only the throne remains free of this deadly device. You swallow hard, and try not to dwell upon the fate of anyone sitting at the table who had incurred their lord's displeasure. Will you now:

Press the white button?	Turn to	**187**
Or leave the Hall?	Turn to	**178**

128

The acidic smoke has badly charred the book of 'Charms', and reduced it to a heap of illegible, blackened pages. You may now, if you wish, examine the remaining book, labelled 'The Eye of the Sorcerer' – turn to **95**; or, alternatively, leave – turn to **135**.

129

Do you have a crystal bottle with silver runes upon it, in which to imprison the soul?

If so — Turn to **29**
If not — Turn to **58**

130

Unable to see, you step backwards off the landing and tumble heavily down the spiral staircase, each stone step bruising you until you fall in a heap in the courtyard. Lose five Strength points.

You pick up your sword from the ground beside you, and take several deep breaths as your sight slowly returns. Will you now:

Investigate the South-West tower? Turn to **94**
Leave through the door in the North wall? Turn to **74**

131

You have managed to pierce the Moat Monster in its single eye, and killed it instantly – turn to **11**.

132

There is a small door at the foot of the South-West look-out tower. It opens easily inwards and you see a small staircase spiralling upwards into the dark. You can hear a strange, deep rumbling sound: turn to **42**.

133

Your efforts to open the casket are in vain, but you see that the front of the casket is inlaid with a square of pure Rubidium, in which is an indentation. If you have a small slab of Rubidium, turn to **82**. If not, you may try to smash the casket with your sword – turn to **38**, or, alternatively, try the door in the East wall of the tower – turn to **142**. Your only other option is to leave the tower – turn to **81**.

134

You throw the stone into the bowl, and it rolls around several times before coming to rest in a blank segment. Nerves taut, you wait – but nothing happens, and you decide not to push your luck by throwing again. Turn to **143**.

135

If you entered the Library through a door which had the letter "L" upon it, turn to **45**. If you entered through a door which did not have a letter, turn to **193**.

136

You eye the helmet and table suspiciously; then an idea strikes you. You turn to face Teel and with a pleasant smile and a prod of your sword, you suggest that he lies down upon the table. His wild eyes glow red at this, and he backs away, his mouth twisting into a lupine snarl. Then before your eyes, he undergoes a rapid transformation and you find yourself face to face with a WEREWOLF! Do you have wolfsbane and silver?

If so — Turn to **199**
If not — Turn to **108**

137

As you enter the cage, the man leaps to his feet and whirls around to face you, half crouching, his eyes glinting red. Will you:

Fight him? Turn to **179**
Lock the cage quickly and turn South along the passage? Turn to **119**

138

Will you now:

Leave the lab? Turn to **158**
Or look at the bookcase? Turn to **167**

139

With a silent prayer, you place the crystal bottle and the talisman on the floor in front of you. Throw two dice.

If the numbers on both dice add up to the same as or less than your Fate/Fortune Score, turn to **39**.

If they add up to more than your Fate/Fortune Score, turn to **169**.

140

The door appears to have no handle or keyhole, but the instant you touch the door, it flies open and your senses are assaulted by a cacophony of noise, and a blinding light. Nightmare images of demons leap at you, and you reel back as a stomach-turning smell hits you.

You close your eyes and ears against this vision of Hell, and drop to the floor. Roll one dice and lose that many Strength points. If you are still alive, turn to **48**.

141

Warily, you go back down into the courtyard. Will you now:

Leave by the door in the North wall? Turn to **74**
Investigate the South-West tower? Turn to **94**

142

The door has no handle, nor keyhole, as far as you can see. Cautiously, you reach out and touch the door – and instantly your senses are assaulted by the wild howling and laughter of an army of fearful demons, an appalling stench of decay, and a blinding, fiercely painful light. You fall to the floor, closing your eyes tight shut against the piercing light and the dreadful images, and your hands covering your ears.

Roll one dice and lose that many Strength points. If you are still alive, turn to **3**.

143

The only other door out of the room is in the North wall, and so you cautiously try the handle – turn to **25**.

144

Will you now try to open the trapdoor? – turn to **65**. Or, if you have not already done so, investigate the rotting sacks? – turn to **76**.

145

The Unicorn is carved from the finest white marble, and is extremely life-like. As you continue to stare at it, you get the strangest feeling that it is looking back at you, its eyes filled with infinite sadness. A slight shudder passes through your body, and you turn quickly away. You need the Unicorn's horn for one of the protective talismans – but how are you to get it? You decide to search the Hall for some clue that may help you. Will you examine:

The throne?	Turn to	**56**
The other statue?	Turn to	**195**
Or, will you leave the Hall?	Turn to	**178**

146

The cavern in which you find yourself is huge, and is filled with benches and shelves, cluttered with test-tubes, flasks, bottles, wires and tubes. A complicated arrangement of experimental equipment is set up on one bench, filled with bubbling green liquid. To the East of the cavern is a slab-like table, at one end of which is a glass, domed helmet, connected up to a mass of electrodes. By the table is a small bookshelf, containing two large, well-worn volumes.

Do you have a companion with you? If so, turn to **136**. If not – turn to **59**.

147

To your dismay, the rope falls short. You do not get a chance to try a second time, as the CYCLOPS charges towards you! – turn to **159**.

148

With a silent prayer, you place the crystal bottle on the floor in front of you, then begin the Spell. Throw one dice.

If you get a 1 or a 6, turn to **39**.

If you get any other number, turn to **169**.

149

The meaning of the inscription becomes clear to you, and facing the white, clenched fist, you speak the words "Short Sword". At first, there is no reaction, and then slowly, the hand opens, revealing in its palm a single, black jewel. Do you wish to attempt to take the jewel from the hand? If so, turn to **60**. If you would rather not risk it, you may leave the cavern through a door in the South wall – turn to **69**.

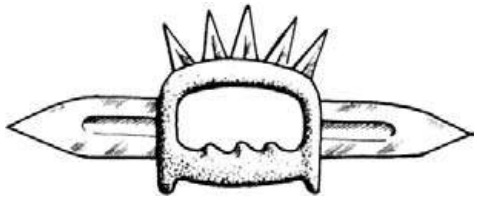
150

If you wish, you can now slide the panel to one side and look through into the room beyond – turn to **98**. If you decide to simply ignore the panel and attempt to open the door, turn to **57**.

151

You find yourself in a large courtyard, paved with dark grey stones. To the South-East and South-West are two look-out towers, and cold fear grips your heart when you realise you might have been seen entering the fortress. You grip your sword tightly, listening for any sound that might indicate that the occupants of the fortress are aware of you, but there is absolute silence. You breathe a sigh of relief, and take another look around. There is a door out of the courtyard in the North wall, opposite the main door. To your left, a low, circular wall rises up from the grey paving, surrounding a dark, moss-covered well. Will you investigate:

The South-West look-out tower?	Turn to	**132**
The South-East look-out tower?	Turn to	**23**
The door in the North wall?	Turn to	**74**
The well?	Turn to	**13**



152

The door is deathly cold to your touch, and so smooth you can hardly feel it. As your fingers explore its icy surface, your hand begins to sink slowly into the blackness and the door gradually fades away before your eyes. You step through the revealed opening and enter a small, dark cave, the walls of which are hewn from glistening black rock. It is lit by two deep red flames that flicker smokily upon slender pedestals, set at opposite ends of the cave. In contrast to the tough rock walls, the floor of the cave is as smooth and as clear as ice – but ice that is the colour of the sky at midnight, filled with a thousand twinkling, blood-red stars, reflections of the light from the smoky torches.

Standing motionless between the two flames is a tall figure, dressed in robes of black silk. His dark head is slightly bowed, looking away from the doorway, and he appears to be in deep concentration. One hand is raised a little, and as you stand silently in the doorway, studying him, he slowly lowers his hand and turns to face you. This, you realise, is Kruglach. He is a striking figure, with darkly handsome features, framed by jet black hair. A small smile twists the corner of his mouth, but he gazes at you with eyes that are of the same unfathomable blackness as the door to his lair. You must act quickly. Do you believe that you have everything necessary for the Spell of Soul Capture?

If so	Turn to	**129**
If not	Turn to	**19**

153

Throw one dice. If you score 1, 2 or 3, turn to **14**. If you score 4, 5 or 6, turn to **191**.

154

As you open the book, real acid seeps out, burning your hands badly, and quickly reducing the book to ashes. Choking smoke billows out, and you stagger back in some pain. Lose two Dexterity points. You may now examine the book entitled 'Eye of the Sorcerer' – turn to **95**; or, alternatively, leave – turn to **135**.

155

Inside the cage are two white rabbits. There is a large notice on the cage, saying "Tomorrow's Dinner".

If you wish to free the rabbits, turn to **26**.

If you wish to leave the rabbits to their fate and go through the door in the East wall, turn to **194**.

156

You venture cautiously down the staircase, testing each step with your foot before putting your full weight on it. At the bottom of the staircase is a narrow North–South tunnel, hewn out of solid rock. Will you go:

North? Turn to **7**
South? Turn to **119**

157

You go out through the West door and enter a small corridor that goes West for a short while. It ends at another door which has a large letter "L" engraved upon it. Will you:

Go through the door? Turn to **17**
Go back to the Great Hall and leave through the North door there? Turn to **186**

158

There are three other doors out of the lab: a second door in the North wall next to the one you entered by; one in the East wall; and one in the South wall. You decide against the North door as it will take you back in the direction you have come from. Will you go through:

The East door? Turn to **9**
The South door? Turn to **180**

159

You have no choice but to try and fight the Cyclops with your sword.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
CYCLOPS:	11	14

If you win, turn to **73**.

160

Try as you might, you cannot solve the meaning of the inscription. You shrug your shoulders and decide that you have more important matters to deal with. Kruglach must surely not be far away from his laboratory and experiments. You see another door out of the cavern in the South wall and you walk down to investigate – turn to **69**.

161

You strike the casket a mighty blow, and there is an explosion of black light!

Blinded, your stagger back. Roll two dice. If the score is the same as, or less than, your Fate/Fortune score, turn to **72**. If it is greater, turn to **130**.

162

You go West for a short distance and then the passage ends at a large wooden door. Will you:

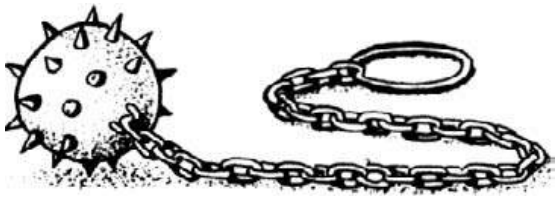
Open the door? Turn to **33**
Turn around and follow the passage East? Turn to **46**

163

You walk through the door into a small library, and discover that the door you have entered by cannot be detected from this side as it is disguised as a bookcase – turn to **8**.

164

You remember what the Goblin Guard told you, and guess that this trapdoor must be the entrance to the caverns, so you take hold of the ring and pull! – turn to **65**.



165

You recall the Goblin's words about the statue of the Unicorn, and, feeling that you are taking a chance, you have second thoughts. If you decide to examine the Unicorn first, turn to **145**. If you would rather reconsider for a moment, turn to **66**.

166

There are two other doors out of the Hall. Will you go through:

The West door? Turn to **157**
The North door? Turn to **186**

167

One of the books is full of meaningless chemical formulae and technical jargon, but the other bears the title "Make Your Own Monster". Intrigued, you flip through it, and see that it is basically an encyclopaedia for every evil, misshapen creature that ever walked this earth. The name "Cyclops" catches your eye, and, remembering that you need two of the creature's teeth for the Spell of Soul Capture, you pause to study what the book has to say. You learn that the Cyclops is a fearsome, one-eyed giant that cannot easily be overcome by mere human strength. It can, however, be rendered completely docile if a rope of golden thread is thrown over its head around its neck. Will you now:

Lie on the table and place the helmet over your head? Turn to **28**
Or will you leave the lab? Turn to **158**

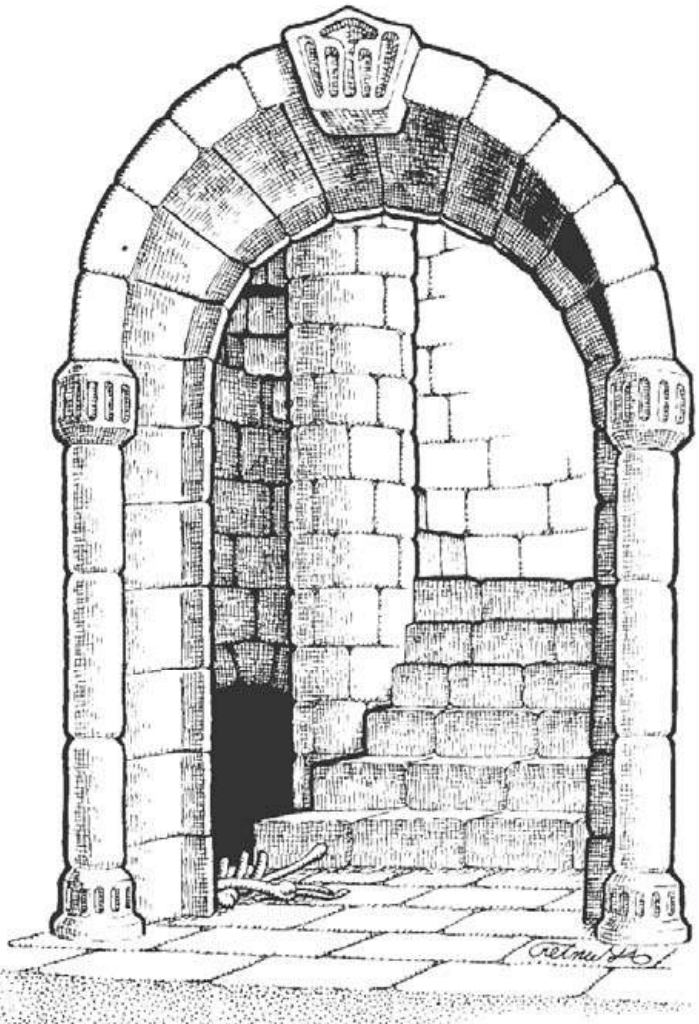
168

Do you have a golden rope? If so, turn to **79**: if not, turn to **159**.

169

Holding the three ingredients cupped in your hands, you say the words that Raaka Dihar told you of in the forest: "Kruglach nothrog gethod."

You hold your breath and study Kruglach intently, not daring to move. Kruglach gazes back at you, and then slowly he smiles an icy evil grimace that chills you to your soul. A wave of weakness washes over you. The blood roars in your ears and the room spins crazily. You fall to your knees, your eyes tightly shut and your hands pressed against the sides of your head. You are being ripped apart, and with your last conscious thought, you realise it is your own soul that is being torn from your body. It is you that will be forever imprisoned in the crystal bottle. Your adventure ends here!



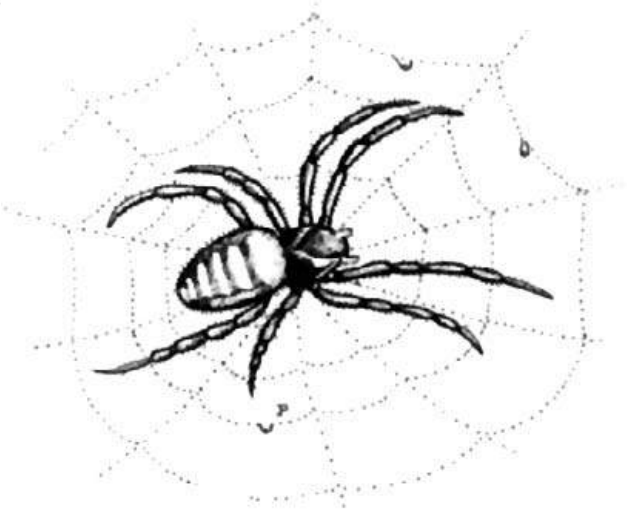
170

Will you now:

Lie on the table and place the helmet over your head? Turn to **28**
Investigate the bookshelf? Turn to **167**
Or leave the lab? Turn to **158**

171

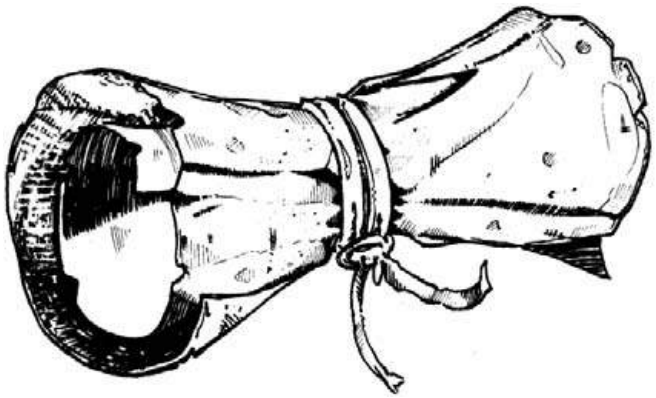
The iron ring is stiff and rusty with age, but you manage to turn it to the right. There is a muffled click and a thud of some great bolt being drawn back, and the door swings open with a screech of protesting hinges. You walk through into the fortress – turn to **151**.



172

As you enter the small, dark cave beyond, there is an almighty roar of rage, and you realise with horror that the occupant of the cave is in fact a CYCLOPS! The one-eyed giant towers above you by a good two feet. Its single red eye glares down at you out of an incredibly ugly face, surrounded by a mane of tangled hair. It is dressed in a few filthy animal hides, and in its right hand it holds a massive wooden club, studded with iron spikes. Did you look at the "Make your own Monster" book in the laboratory?

If so — Turn to **168**
If not — Turn to **159**



173

Set into the table are what at first appear to be two sunken bowls. Looking closer, you see that each is divided into six segments, and at the side of both is a small round stone.

The segments of the first bowl are alternately white and black. The second has three blank segments, and three with the symbol of a snake inscribed.

Evidently, this is some kind of game of chance, in which the outcome is determined by throwing the stone into one of the bowls. Will you:

Try your luck at this game? — Turn to **16**
Leave by the North door? — Turn to **25**
Go back out through the East door? — Turn to **46**

174

Instantly, you drop the book and it slowly dissolves at your feet, giving off choking black smoke – turn to **128**.

175

Continuing to search you find a coil of golden rope, which you quickly put into your backpack – turn to **126**.

176

The passage goes East for a little while and then turns to the North. After a short distance, it ends at an impressive door of beautiful dark red wood, covered in intricate carvings. Will you:

Open the door? — Turn to **89**
Turn around and go South, then West back to the junction? — Turn to **86**

177

Kruglach's features change into dark hatred, as he realises that you are protected from his Spell. He draws a slender black sword from his robes, and advances towards you, his eyes glowing vivid green. You can finally engage in combat in the way with which you are familiar. Turn to **123**.

178

If you entered the Great Hall through the West door, turn to **87**. If you entered through the South door, turn to **166**.

179

As you raise your sword to fight, the man undergoes a rapid transformation, and you realise to your horror that you are facing a Werewolf! Do you have wolfsbane and silver? If so, turn to **199**. If not, turn to **108**.

180

You go through the South door into another large cavern, in the centre of which is a small, oval pool of black liquid. To your astonishment, you see there is a hand, clenched into a fist, lifted up out of the pool, as white and as motionless as if carved from marble. At the side of the pool is a wooden plaque, upon which is written in large, bold script: "Lady of the Lake Simulation. Experiment one – hand release trigger." Underneath is a rough graph plotting "Number of Tries" against "Successes" – and you see that there have not been any results worth noticing! Turn to **55**.

181

As you reach the statue of the Unicorn, you see that it is made of pure white marble. You reach out your hand to touch it, but draw back – its eyes are looking directly at you!

You realise that you must either investigate the Great Hall further, or else leave. Will you:

Examine the throne?	Turn to **56**
Leave the Great Hall?	Turn to **178**

182

Will you examine the book entitled:

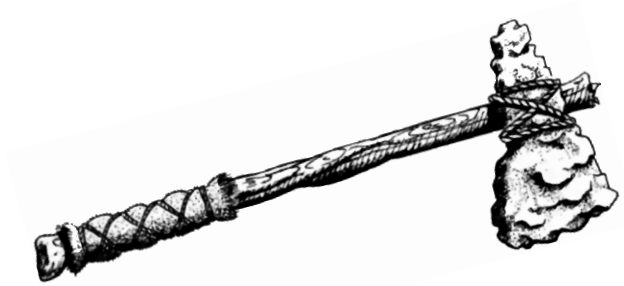
'Acid'?	Turn to **192**
'Charms'?	Turn to **64**
'The Eye of the Sorcerer'?	Turn to **95**

183

You have defeated Kruglach but are unable to imprison his black soul which fills the room. You can flee – perhaps to return one day, to try again to capture the evil soul. But, sooner or later, the soul of Kruglach will re-enter, and revitalise his body. The reign of terror is not over yet!

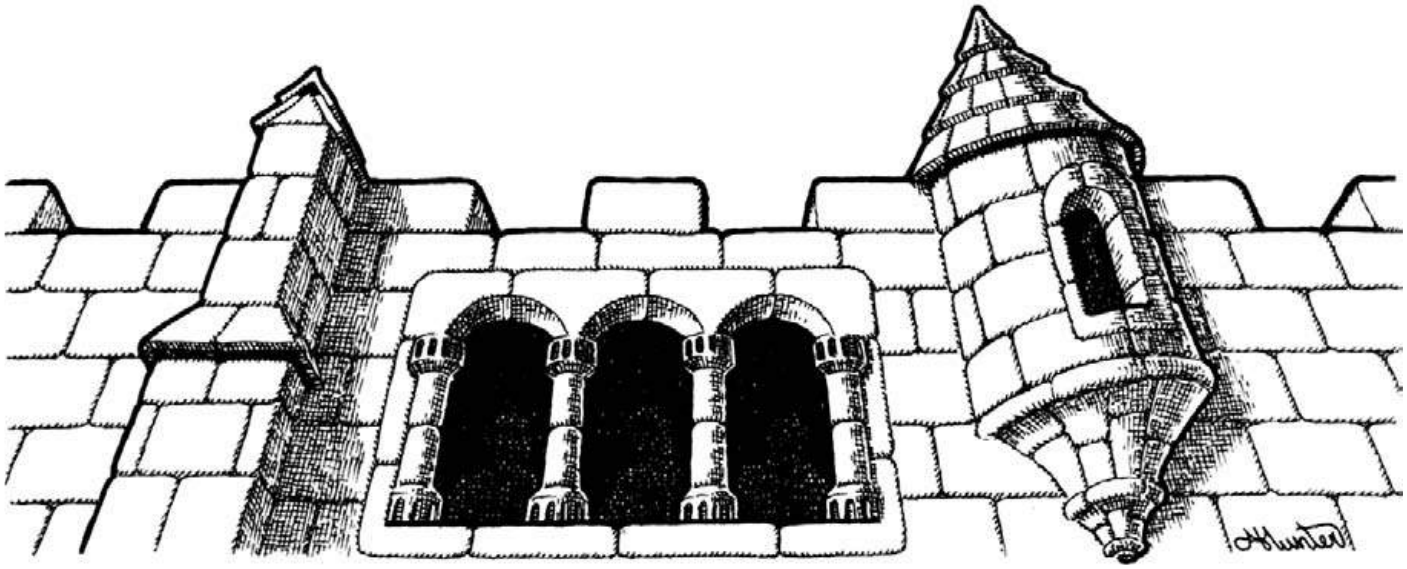
184

You mutter the number of Kruglach to yourself, and as you do so, a word begins to take shape on the page. You can just read 'Megoboneend', and you memorise it as the word almost at once fades from the page. Turn to **34**.



185

You sort through the broken wood and rusty barrel hoops, and come across a metal ring set into the floor. You push the rubbish to one side and clear away the dirt on the floor, to discover that the ring is attached to a wooden trapdoor. Did you ask a Goblin where Kruglach is to be found? If so, turn to **164**. If not, turn to **144**.



186

You enter a narrow passage that goes North for a short while before turning West. After a short distance, it ends at a blank wall. The dead end arouses your suspicions and you decide to search for a secret door. As you probe the cold stone wall, one of the blocks suddenly gives way beneath your hand! Instantly, a section of the wall slides silently to one side, revealing a dark hole – turn to **96**.

187

As you press the white button, there is a flicker of blue light around the table. Slowly, the top of the table in front of you slides back, revealing a piece of parchment. You read:

"To gain the protective horn of the Unicorn, you must be strong, clever and honest. Only *one* part of the Unicorn is safe to touch. Of the three pairs of statements below, one is true and one is false in each case. Read them carefully before you decide what to do – your fate depends on your ability to think clearly." You read:

The right hoof is safe to touch.
The left hoof is safe to touch.

The horn is safe to touch.
The horn is not safe to touch.

The horn is safe to touch.
The left hoof is not safe to touch.

Will you touch:

The left hoof?	Turn to **107**
The right hoof?	Turn to **70**
The horn itself?	Turn to **27**

188

You carefully extract 3 long, grey hairs from the Werewolf s tail, and put them safely into your backpack. If you fought in the laboratory, turn to **170**. If you fought elsewhere, turn to **100**.

189

You find yourself in a small kitchen. A stained, dirty table stands in the centre of the room. A cracked enamel sink with a rusty pump is to your left, and several shelves line the wall to your right. On one shelf is a cage with something white and furry in it. Standing by the table, with a large meat cleaver raised in his hand, is a huge, well-muscled Ogre, who has been attacking an extremely gory carcass. He pauses in surprise when he sees you, and then, gripping the cleaver firmly in both hands, advances towards you! You draw your sword to fight him – turn to **6**.

190

The massive BONE-GRINDER lies dead at your feet, and you walk round the great carcass to examine your surroundings more carefully. Will you:

Investigate the table? Turn to **173**
Leave through the door in the North wall? Turn to **25**

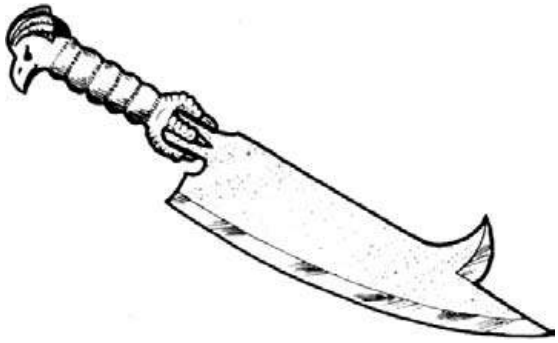
191

You toss the stone into the bowl, and it rolls around for some time before finally coming to rest in a white segment. A great surge of energy floods through you – add three Strength points, and turn to **44**.

192

The book of 'Acid' has an evil enchantment upon it, and as you open it, real acid seeps out, burning your hands! Roll one dice.

If you throw 1–3 Turn to **174**
If you throw 4–6 Turn to **15**



193

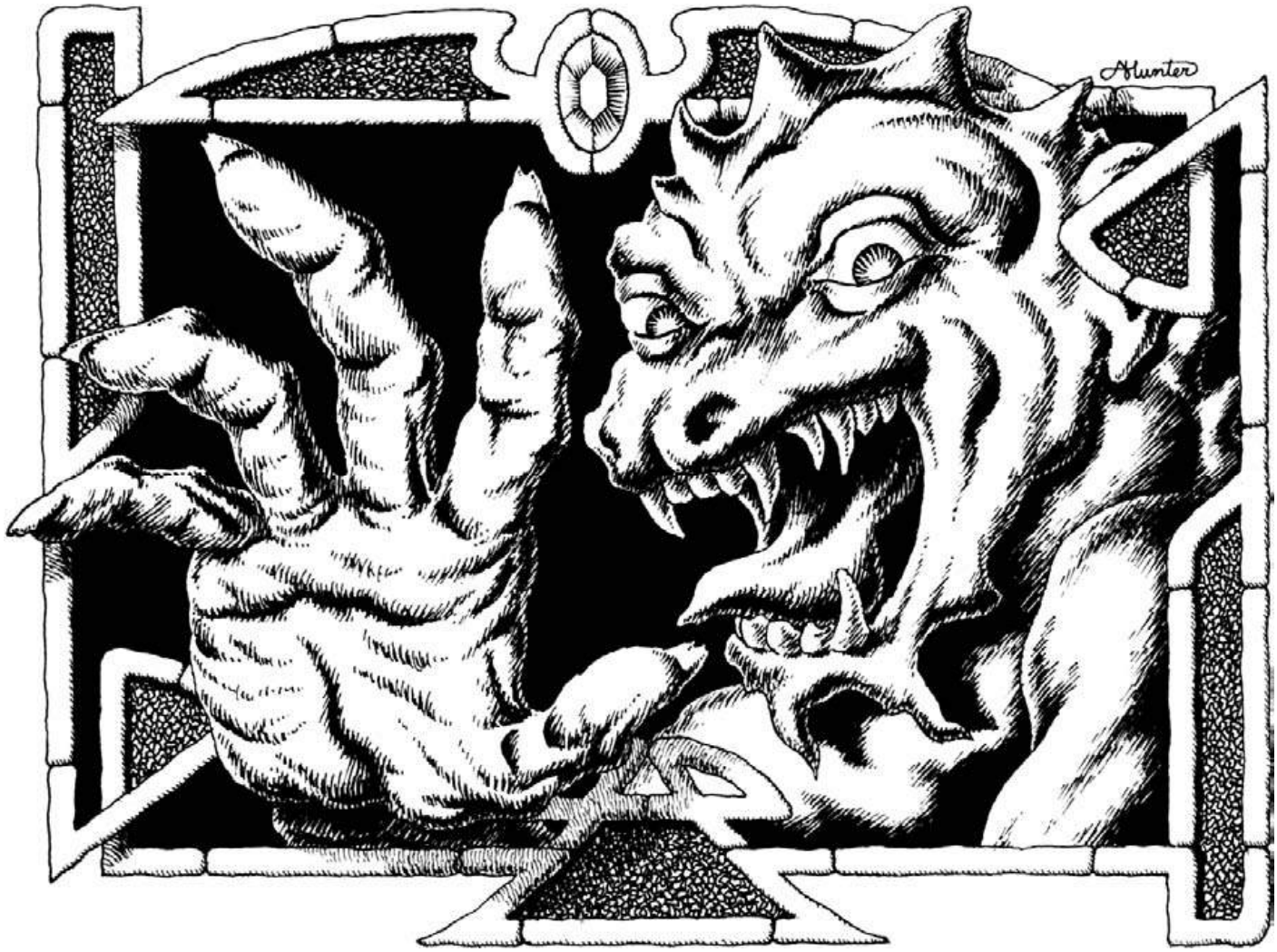
There are two other doors out of the room. Will you go through:

The North door? Turn to **85**
The East door? Turn to **106**

194

You enter a room which obviously was some sort of store room, as you can see a few broken barrels, some mouldy sacks of grain, and rotting piles of rope and cloth. The floor is strewn with the remains of mouldy cabbage leaves and squashed potatoes. The only door, as far as you can see, is in the West wall. You decide to have a rummage through the rubbish. Will you examine:

The broken barrels? Turn to **185**
The sacks, rope and cloth? Turn to **76**



195

You begin to walk towards the statue, but suddenly freeze in your tracks and your blood runs cold in your veins – for the statue slowly turns its stone head to stare right at you! In a flash, you realise it is in fact not a statue, but a Gargoyle: a fearful creature of great strength that can camouflage itself to appear like stone.

The Gargoyle flexes its long grey fingers. Its grip is powerful enough to crush the life from you. Will you:

Fight?	Turn to **35**
Flee through the nearest door (in the North wall)?	Turn to **186**

196

Will you now, examine:

The Unicorn?	Turn to **181**
The throne?	Turn to **56**
Or will you leave the Hall?	Turn to **178**

197

Kruglach's lifeless body shudders violently, as a black shadow issues from his mouth. Turn to **183**.

198

You reach swiftly into your backpack, and hold out the inscribed amulet. There is a wild screaming in the air, as Kruglach's black fire burns itself into a vacuum. Stone-faced, you face each other again. Turn to **177**.

199

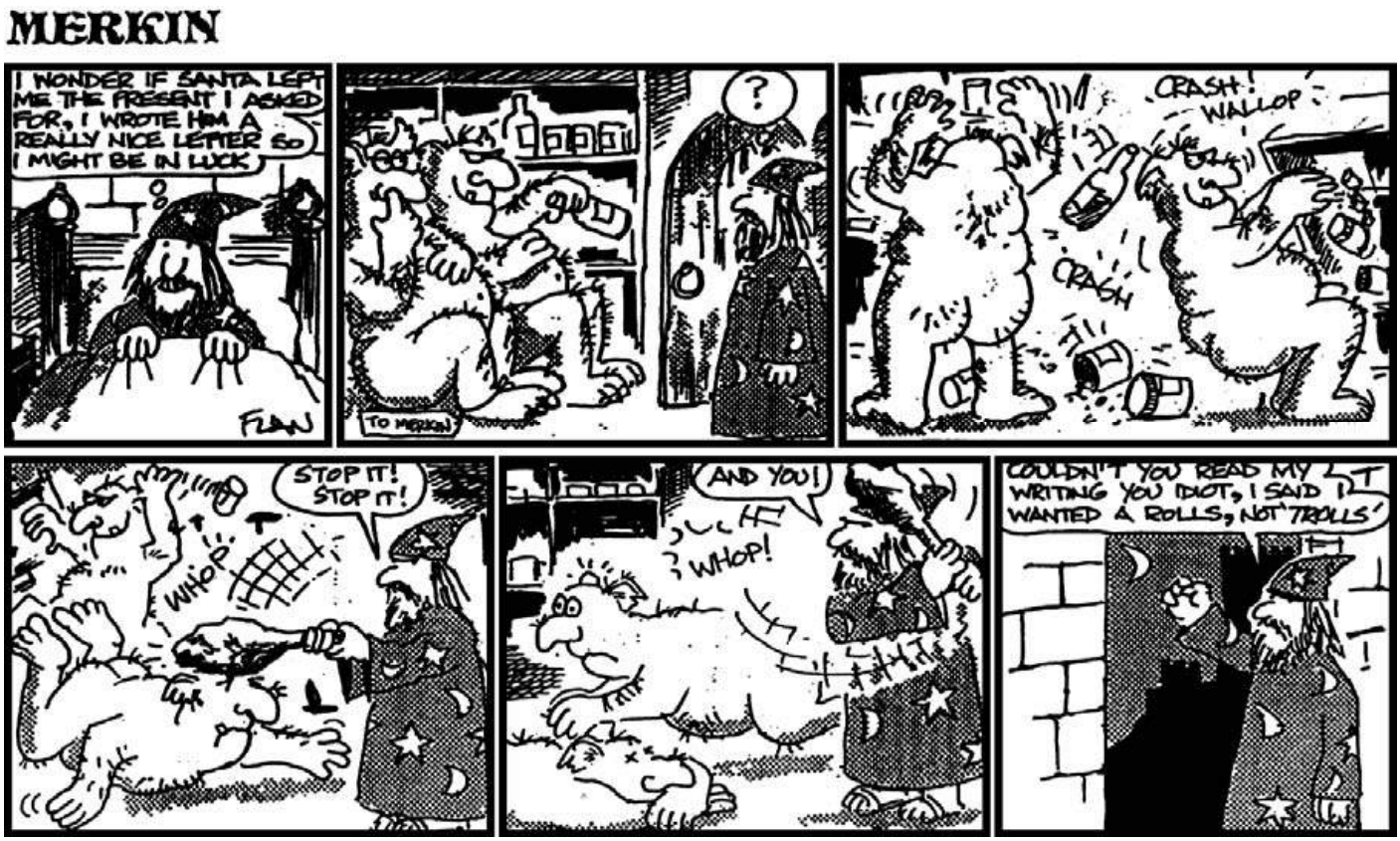
You hurl the Wolfsbane and silver into the Werewolf's snarling face! The beast utters an un

earthly howl of pain, and collapses, writhing, to the floor. Then, after a violent shudder, lies still. You prod the body tentatively with the tip of your sword but there is no reaction – the Werewolf is dead! Turn to **188**.

200

Before you in a tangle of black robes, lies Kruglach. His demon soul has fled his body and you see that the crystal bottle is filled with a swirling black mist. The silver stopper is secure, and Kruglach's soul is imprisoned within. His evil will cease and the land will be free once more. You can return victorious to the surrounding villages and collect your reward.

But what will you do with the bottle and the evil secret that it holds? Leave it here in this dimly lit cave where one of Kruglach's servants might find it? Throw it back where you first discovered it? Carry it with you always and hope that it never falls into the wrong hands? Is there truly anywhere that you can hide it and know that it will remain safely sealed for eternity . . . or will that be your next quest? The hunger for adventure is in your blood, and it would be a challenge indeed to find a resting place for this bottle where neither man nor magic could touch it. An enchanted fortress? A bottomless abyss? The lair of some fearful beast? You cannot know, but you can be sure that, whatever happens, with a demon in your backpack it will not be dull!


MERKIN
I WONDER IF SANTA LEFT ME THE PRESENT I ASKED FOR. I WROTE HIM A REALLY NICE LETTER SO I MIGHT BE IN LUCK
FLAN
?
TO MERKIN
CRASH!
WALLOP
CRASH
STOP IT! STOP IT!
WHOP
AND YOU!
WHOP!
COULDN'T YOU READ MY WRITING YOU IDIOT, I SAID I WANTED A ROLLS, NOT TROLLS!

MESSAGES from BEYOND

Dear *PROTEUS*,

Having just completed adventure No. 12, we are writing to express a concern. We encountered difficulties in solving some of the puzzles. Obviously one way of cheating is to look through the adventure until the adventurer comes across the appropriate section number, but this of course is NOT the ideal method! One suggestion is that the solutions to all the puzzles could be printed in the next edition; thus helping adventurers to understand some of the methods to solving the puzzles and perhaps explaining where they went wrong.

However, a more pleasant note to end on. We have thoroughly enjoyed the adventures produced in your magazine and hope they will continue to be as stimulating – although at times frustrating!

P.S. We are both in our twenties – is this too old to participate in *PROTEUS* adventures?

Carolyn Collins and Steve Mason,
Stoke-on-Trent

It would be unfair on all those who purchase back-numbers of PROTEUS to print solutions to the puzzles – persevere, you'll get there in the end!

As far as age is concerned – PROTEUS knows no barriers. One of our more senior members of staff is totally addicted to the adventures and although we can't tell you his exact age, he claims not to have shaved for the last 300 years.

Dear *PROTEUS*,

As I don't pay much attention to Sci-Fi, 'Challenge of the Promethean Guild' did not appeal to me. But I did enjoy 'The Shadow of Shargan" – in my opinion the best *PROTEUS* adventure so far.

Fortunately, my mother is good at working out puzzles so I don't have any problem there!

I am pleased to see that you are including more than 200 sections in your adventures as it makes them so much longer. At the moment I am striving to write my own adventure game using your effective rule system and shall forward it to you for comment in due course.

The artwork in *PROTEUS* is some of the best I've seen and how anyone can say it's poor is beyond me. And those complaining about the size of the poster ought to think themselves lucky for getting a poster at all – most magazines don't bother!

May your devious minds never falter and if I escape from Shargan's lair, I may have enough gold pieces for the next issue!

P.S. Please print my artwork.

Yours Death-Defyingly,

Richard Terry,
Stourbridge,
West Midlands.

In case you had trouble escaping from Shargan's lair, we skipped an issue before printing your letter AND your artwork. Perhaps you should persuade your mum to join our Pen-Pals section?

Dear *PROTEUS*,

I love your mag – but how do you solve the Golden Number Riddle? (Issue No.9). It's driving me mad!

Secondly, why not have a competition to see who can write the best fantasy adventure and the winning entry can be published like a replica of No. l? Thirdly, why don't you publish No. 1 again? I have the facsimile issue which was a great idea, but not quite the same!

Keep up the good work – the artwork is brill, if perhaps a little large. If it was cut down to a smaller size you could make the adventures longer.

P.S. Hope you like the drawing of what I do to my enemies when I'm finished with them in *PROTEUS*!

Kevin Cleary,
Co. Cork,
Eire.

We're not sure that other readers would agree with you about reducing the size of our artwork. Meanwhile, we've printed your gruesome picture – sorry it's not very large but in view of your comments we felt we should make room for more letters! Speaking of which, the next one should be of particular interest to you.

Dear *PROTEUS*,

Have any PROTEUS readers read Steven Caldwell's 'Galactic Encounters' books? Despite the Sci-Fi title, most of them contain stuff of interest to fantasy freaks. Have you thought of using his ideas in your adventures, e.g. the Goricon (featured on the cover of No. 11) or the Fangstone (both in 'Aliens in Space')? And if not, why not?

Anyway, I can't think of anything that needs changing so I'll stop trying.

P.S. I have access to an original copy of issue No.1!! Anyone interested can find me in the Pen Pals section.

Anthony Mead,
Dartford,
Kent.

Prepare thyself for a deluge of Pen-Pals!

Dear *PROTEUS*,

I would just like to say how fantastic your magazine is. I

always looked upon role-playing magazines as games for 'little kiddies', but since a friend lent me issue No. 1 (which I thought was great – I look forward to reading more of Elizabeth Caldwell's work), my foolish views have changed.

I particularly enjoy the riddles – more please. The drawings too are first class, although it makes me wonder what kind of twisted minds these artists have. Still, from one twisted mind to another here's my picture; hope you like it.

Finally, how about printing a map of the previous issue in each magazine then we readers can compare our maps to the real thing – comes in handy for a little cheating too!

Colin Keown,
Liverpool.

Come on now Colin – we're surprised at you! A twisted mind we can accept but a willingness to cheat? Never!

Dear *PROTEUS*,

Brilliant! The only word for it – *PROTEUS* has really come up with an awesome scenario this time. 'In Search of the Lost Land' is one heck of a lot better than that drivel in Issue No. 13. Please print more of this standard.

Can you at some stage do an RPG with lots and lots of spells in – preferably written by Ruth Pracy. You could also have a horror story in *PROTEUS* and make it really hard to complete.

Paige the Oracle,
Birmingham.

Thanks for your suggestions and hope you enjoy this bumper issue as much as No. 14!

Our artists are getting VERY twitchy! More and more of your letters are accompanied by impressive pieces of artwork – however, we've only managed to rescue a few examples from our postal-devouring pet hobgoblin, certainly not enough to form a rogues gallery this time around. Keep the monsters coming in and we'll print a selection in the next issue of *PROTEUS*.

If you would like to advise readers of your club or role-playing group, or ask if anyone is interested in forming a group in your area, write to Club Corner, Proteus, 6 Church Street, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 1JH.

I am a 13-year-old elf named Elvon who would like to join a D & D club.
Bradley Tyler,
[redacted]
Sheffield[redacted].

Male, 30s, seeks others to form fantasy group, Sheffield area. Tel: W. Bate on 0909 566695 and leave a message.

We are an established group of role-players, wargamers and modellers and have won several major awards for display games and audience participation games. We also organise regular trips to hobbyist conventions across the country. We play most of the major RPGs and we'll give anything a try! So come and enjoy the friendly atmosphere of one of the best clubs around.
Omega,
C/o Paul Mather,
[redacted]
Hattersley,
Hyde,
Cheshire[redacted].

Kobold Killers Anonymous would be pleased to hear from serious role-players in the Westbury/Trowbridge area, aged 13 plus. We play D & D, Paranoia, Runequest, Warhammer and meet in players' homes, evenings and weekends. Interested? Contact Lee on [redacted] or write to:
[redacted]
Westbury,
Wilts[redacted].

I need a pen-pal! Male or female aged 11 to 15.
Lee Sanders,
[redacted],
Syston,
Leics.[redacted].

I'd like a pen-pal aged 13 to 15 who's heavily into *PROTEUS*.
Paul Hansford,
[redacted]
Market Harborough,
Leics[redacted].

11-year-old girl interested in athletics, would like a male pen-pal, aged 11 to 13.
Fay,
[redacted]
Merley,
Wimborne,
Dorset[redacted].

Wanted: Pen-pal dedicated to fantasy (aged 12-14). I enjoy *PROTEUS*, fighting fantasy, D&D, etc.
Dominic Brown,
[redacted]
Lewes Road,
Ringmer,
E. Sussex[redacted].

Pen-pal wanted, 11-13 years old, male or female.
Tessa,
[redacted]
Broadstone,
Dorset.

Female pen-pal wanted. I am 12 and want a pen-pal of the same age. Write to:
Sagitta the Crossbowman,
[redacted],
Ellesmere Port,
Cheshire[redacted].

I'm 16 and I'd like to write to and/or meet other fantasisers!
Anthony Mead,
[redacted]
Dartford,
Kent[redacted].

Wanted: Female pen-pal (12-14), who is mad on fighting fantasy books and supports Newcastle United (although that's got nothing to do with it!).
Eric Wood,
[redacted]
Berwick upon Tweed,
Northumberland[redacted].

G'day!
13-year-old reader from Down Under would like a pen-pal, male or female:
Gregory Fletcher,
[redacted]
Queensland[redacted],
Australia.

I am aged 16 and need to converse with any lawful Paladins/Paladinesses aged 16+.
Lee Adams,
[redacted]
Westbury,
Wilts[redacted].

I am 17 years old, looking for anyone interested in RPGs and reading fantasy stories.
Branden Hart,
[redacted]
Westdene,
Johannesburg[redacted],
South Africa.

Hi! I'm a 14-year-old female looking for male adventurers aged 14 or over.
Imanya the Dark One,
[redacted]
Rumney,
Cardiff[redacted].

Hi! Looking for pen-pals between 11 and 14 interested in fighting fantasy books and Way of the Tiger.
Helen Donovan – Dragon Slayer of Wales,
[redacted]
Victoria Park,
Cardiff[redacted].

QUAZI-DO-DO
'A DAY OF REJOICE AT THE FORTRESS VOIDINESS'
HAPPY BIRTHDAY
BORN OCT 31ST
WATCHED 25 DEC 20
-OH-REATNESS
♪HAPPY BIRTHDAY LORD BILBON, HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU.... 1001 TODAY, 1001 TODAY HE'S GOT THE KEYS TO THE DOOR NEVER BEEN 1001 BEFORE♪
BLOW OUT THE CANDLES AND MAKE A WISH O' LORD!
'HMM I WISH, I WISH I WAS A BIT YOUNGER'
FOR HE IS A♪ JOLLY GOOD DEMI-GOD♫!!
SPUFF!
SNIT!
HURRAY!
!!
POO
BOIL FOR 10 MINUTES!
"IT WAS A JOKE, JUST A JOKE I SWEAR...."

ART-MARK·KDUNN · STORY-IAN DOCKER!!!

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